

ANALYSIS
OF
RESEARCHES
INTO
THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS
OF
HISTORICAL TIME,
FROM THE CREATION
TO THE ACCESSION OF C. CALIGULA:

AN
Attempt to ascertain the Dates of the more notable Events
in Ancient Universal History by Astronomical Calcula-
tion; the mean Quantity of Generations, proportionate
to the Standard of Natural Life, in the several Ages of
the World; Magistracies, National Epochs, &c.; and to
connect, by an accurate Chronology, the Times of the
Hebrews with those of the co-existent Pagan Empires;
interspersed with Remarks on Archbishop Usher's Annals
of the Old and New Testament.

Subjoined is an Appendix, containing Strictures on Sir Isaac
Newton's Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms, and on Mr.
Falconer's Chronological Tables, from Solomon to the Death
of Alexander the Great.

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*The purest and most fruitful Source of Ancient History is, doubtless, to be
found in the Holy Bible. BIELFIELD ON UNIVERSAL ERUDITION.*

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TO
THE REVEREND AND LEARNED,
THE PROFESSORS AND OTHER MEMBERS
OF
BOTH THE FLOURISHING UNIVERSITIES
IN ENGLAND,
THIS SPECIMEN OF SACRED CRITICISM
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
BY THEIR MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

IT was the author's intention to publish, several years since, the result of disquisitions, begun in early life and continued amid a variety of professional labours, not to mention emergent avocations, and peculiar difficulties, from the mysterious nature of the subject; but most of all, from the want of a collateral history, commensurate with the Sacred Annals of the Hebrews. A record, similar to the Chronicles of the Kings in Judah and Israel, well attested, proceeding from the same point of time, and referring to the same persons, events, and dates, would have been a desirable acquisition.

SUCH a separate record never did exist. For from the BEGINNING, as defined by Moses, to that POINT in time, with which the Sacred Annals terminate, nothing is with certainty known, respecting the Gentile Antiquities, besides the reports of the inspired writers; and whatever events they have preserved from oblivion, so far from comprising a full history of all nations, amount to no more than a few concise hints concerning a very few of the idolatrous tribes, contiguous to Babylonia and Palestine.

ACCORDING to Archbishop Usher, (who in the arts of computation, and historical arrangement, excelled all his predecessors), the Hebrew scriptures contain the

History of 36 centuries, measured by astronomical years, singly, or in combination, generations, magistracies, &c. Moderate and every way credible, though not universally adopted, is this quantity of intermediate time. That luminary of his age, having long poised, in an equal balance, the merits of the Hebrew and Greek computation, from Adam to Abraham, found the former to preponderate, and judiciously decided in favour of evidence, stampd with every signature of probability and truth.

HIS preference, more from the strength of reason, than respect to the authority of his name, *reformed* the sentiments of his country, and *confirmed* those on the continent, wherever assent to the Hebrew chronology had not previously obtained an establishment, as, indeed it had done, in the western church, from the days of Jerome ; and about the era of the Reformation, it derived canonical authority from a decree of the council at Trent, before, or about, A. D. 1542.

IN Britain, however, during the currency of the xviiith century, the spurious chronology of the Septuagint, so justly exploded 150 years ago, has again risen into credit, and superseded the genuine notations of Moses, the first Chronologer and Historian.

THIS gradual change of national opinion, concerning the wilful corruption of the Hebrew oracles, and the superior integrity of the Alexandrian version, (chiefly with regard to those numbers which determine the years of the world prior to Abraham), disconcerted ~~the~~ author's measures, and unavoidably protracted the
design

design of publishing his arrangements of the Sacred History, constructed on the authority of the Hebrew numbers *, the prime source of computation.

IN a Dissertation not yet published, but kept in reserve for the RESEARCHES, the comparative merits of the Hebrew and Greek computations are, at large,

* Slow was the transition from the reformed chronology by Usher, to the antiquated errors of the Alexandrian school: In 1722 Whiston published the first volume of his essay for restoring the true text of the Old Testament. Other authors adopted his wild position, that the extended chronology of the Greek Pentateuch is preferable to the more concise scheme of the Hebrew text. Kennicott collated a great many MSS. not without the hope of finding a considerable majority in favour of the world's superior antiquity. All his writings, those published AFTER the edition of his Hebrew Bible not excepted, express his full conviction, that the Jews of the second century wilfully mutilated the chronological notations in the Hebrew GENESIS: but the result of his laborious investigations did not justify the augmentation of any one number, much less of all. His learned contemporaries, however, gave him implicit credit for a decision, absolutely incapable of evidence, sufficient to enforce belief;—the authenticity of the Septuagint Chronology. By respectable authors has this doctrine been maintained, (1.) in a Sermon, printed 1792, where it is affirmed, “That the space from the hour of the Fall to the present day is full 7000 years;”—and (2.) in a late English version of the Pentateuch, the exaggerated numbers in the xith chapter of GENESIS are taken from the 70 Interpreters (as they are called), under the solemn declaration, that the version is faithfully translated from corrected texts of the original. In the former case, extreme credulity, in the latter, the deceiveableness of Romish imposture, is exemplified.

considered, and a more succinct view exhibited in the ensuing ANALYSIS. Be it, in a form some what more diffusive, remarked, that

1. THE marvellous stories, transmitted concerning the formation of this version, if true, amount to much stronger evidence, than that alleged for the authenticity of the original ; or, to invert the argument, is it probable, that the testimony of Moses, alone, was sufficient to induce conviction ; and that the testimony of 70 Scribes, shut up in separate cells, who all translated the same writings, so as not to vary in one phrase or particle, was requisite to establish the honesty, skill, and inspiration of the translators ? If this query be answered in the affirmative, unavoidable is the inference, that ~~LEWIS~~ GEDDES was under obligations to produce evidences of his skill and fidelity, 70 degrees stronger than Moses for his veracity as an inspired writer, which character this consummate critic has ventured to controvert, with needless repetitions of his belief.

2. KENNICOTT alleges, that some copies of the Hebrew Pentateuch, having the larger numbers, were extant in the 4th century. On the report of Eusebius the credibility of this fact is said to rest. Other evidence is produced to confirm the belief of copies existing in the 7th, and even subsequent centuries *. With all deference to the veracity of these witnesses, be it remarked, that their evidence is good for nothing. It ought to have been proved, by evidence, direct or circumstantial, that copies having the larger numbers did

* Kennicott's remarks on select passages, 1787. p. 17.

actually

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actually exist before the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, the date of the Greek version. Be it supposed, though it cannot be admitted, that the incredulous Jews of the second century had mutilated the genuine chronology of Moses, much more probable it is, that certain Christians, more zealous than honest, did actually corrupt certain copies of the Hebrew Pentateuch, by foisting in the amplified numbers of the Greek version. This might have been done by some proselytes from Judaism to Christianity, whose attachment to the enlarged chronology prompted them to procure it the sanction of Moses' authority. In the register of Jacob's family, Gen. xlv. are various interpolations. Joseph's age was but 39 in the 130th of his father. The son at the age of 30 was introduced to Pharaoh, and was then unmarried. After 9 years, on the arrival of Jacob, Manasseh and Ephraim are in the Hebrew mentioned as the whole of Joseph's family. But in the Greek version Manasseh and Ephraim had, each, two sons and a grandson. These were undoubtedly taken by the translators from a more recent catalogue. In like manner, six or seven sons of Benjamin were inserted in that list, from the Hebrew books of numbers, or 1 Chronicles, many ages, perhaps, before the date of the Septuagint version. Moses could not possibly construct that register in its present form: so many and obvious are its errors. Kennicott did not apprehend it to be in the least degree corrupted; and in none of his bulky volumes does one hint occur for an emendation.—These, and the like interpolations, might
have

have been introduced, without an intention to falsify the original. More regard, however, was had to the number of names, than to physical possibility.

3. WHETHER the Hebrew numbers were curtailed, or those of the Greek version enlarged, the fraud was executed, wilfully, methodically, with provident foresight, and every plausible art of deception. Who were the agents? whether the Jews, or the Christians, of the second century? Against the Jews the charge is thus produced, in form and substance, by very expert practitioners in the court of calumny.

“THE Jews had a mind to have left out a century in the ages of all the patriarchs, before they begat children, and to have added it to the after-term of their lives : but they found, that, if they dropped the centuries in the ages of Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech, before they begat children, (as they had done of all the rest), and added them to the remainder of their lives ; they must, by this reckoning, have extended their three lives, beyond the Flood *.”

It is replied, That no reason, which could induce the Jews of the second century to falsify their records, occurs, or can be assigned. The contested notations from Adam to Abraham relate primarily to the genealogies of the intermediate families, and eventually to the accumulating years of the world. But in the first or second century, neither the Jews, nor the Christians, computed times by the Mosaical numbers. In private

* Jackson's Chronol. vol. i. p. 56. and Kennicott's Select Remarks, p. 17.

families,

families, and in their public assemblies for worship and instruction, the Greek version, as better understood, was by both parties preferred. Certain it is, that the numbers in that version were enlarged at its very formation *. Now, if either party were convinced that an origin too remote by several centuries was ascribed to the creation, the natural method would have been to reduce the notations in the Greek Pentateuch to a more authentic standard. That standard must have been the Hebrew text; if so be that the Alexandrian interpreters first deviated from the Mosaical computation.

4. THAT the Jews, as a collective body, could, at no time after Moses, and before the final catastrophe of Jerusalem, by a public deed, vitiate their sacred records, and escape detection, are points so intuitively obvious, that every attempt to evince the impossibility of success in attempts for that end, would be a needless expence of argument.

5. ON the other hand, every suspicious circumstance, every colour of actual guilt, and every probable temptation to amplify numbers, rests on the Alexandrine interpreters.

It is said, that they were but five in number, one for each volume of the Pentateuch; and all confined to separate cells †. But be it admitted that the number was lxxii. much stronger is the probability that so

* See Yardley's Genealogies, and Winder on Knowledge.

† For the truth of this fact Prideaux refers to the authority of Tract. Sopherim. cap. i.

small a number of men should agree in a fraud, than that the whole Jewish nation, magistrates, priests, levites, scribes, and people, did unanimously vitiate their sacred books. Such a project could not have been executed without a controversy, and historians would have recorded the names of the agents, the time, the place, the motives, the circumstances, which obstructed or favoured the reception of the scheme. The impostor Aristæas takes notice, that only one true copy of the Hebrew original was transmitted from Jerusalem to Alexandria. To prevent the danger of a shameful detection, that one copy, if dismembered and destroyed, could never be produced, as an evidence either of fidelity or fraud. But at Jerusalem an immediate discovery must have been unavoidable.

6. IT must farther be considered, that the translators of the Septuagint, whatever was their number, had very specious and prevalent inducements to amplify the Hebrew antiquities. Herodotus, misled by the ostentatious vanity of the Egyptian priests, assigned to that Empire an incredibly remote establishment. This national pride, like the pestilence, soon infected the contiguous inhabitants of Samaria and Phœnicia. The former, one full century prior to the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, had procured a copy of the law for the use of the temple on mount Gerizim; and from every probable circumstance it is inferred, that the amplified numbers were first inserted in that copy, [the Samaritan] and afterwards in the Greek version, where freedoms, far more unreasonable, were taken with the venerable original; which

which, however, both parties left immaculate. The result of all these presumptions is, that the numbers of the Hebrew text were not retrenched, but those of the Greek version exaggerated. Be the terms of the indictment, as framed by Jackson and Kennicott, inverted, the following will be its tenor :

“ THE translators at Alexandria had a mind to add one century to the ages of all the patriarchs before they begat children, and to shorten in proportion the after-term of their lives : but they found, that, if they augmented the ages of Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech, before they begat children, (as they had done of all the rest), they must, by this reckoning, have extended these three lives beyond the Flood.” Every competent and impartial judge, who weighs probabilities in an equal balance, will pronounce, without hesitation, that the Alexandrian Jews, biassed by an attachment to an exorbitant chronology, added about fifteen centuries to the Mosaic numbers, with the view of sheltering the Hebrews from the supposed reproach of an upstart race, and a recent origin.

7. KENNICOTT feigns an imaginary motive which he thinks influenced the Jews of the second century. “ Let it not be forgotten, that their plan was to bring back the birth of Jesus Christ from the vith to the ivth Chiliad, from about the year 5500 to 3760 ; in order to prove, that, at the birth of Jesus, the time for the Messiah, was not then come *.”

* Gen. Dissert. p. 32. and Remarks, p. 20.

THE Jews were indeed inexpert chronologers, and the primitive Christians still less accomplished. The former anticipating the birth of Abraham by 60 years, and retrenching almost two centuries from the duration of the Persian Empire, allow about 3760 years from Adam to our vulgar era. But these mistakes had no reference to the term specified for the advent of the Messiah. Their computation was much more accurate than that of the Christian Fathers, prior to Jerom and Augustine. If the birth of Christ be brought into coincidence with 5500, the date exceeds the truth by almost 15 centuries, whereas, that assigned by the masters of the synagogue falls short by about 244 years. On the authority of tradition, they believed that the continuance of the world would be six millenaries, divided into three equal periods, under the Patriarchs, the Law, and the Messiah ; and the viith millenary they characterised as sabbatical. This is the doctrine of their Gemara, or collection of traditions ; but it certainly was much more ancient. The opinion is reported by Barnabas, the companion of the apostle Paul, and was maintained by others of the Christian Fathers even those of the FIRST century *.

8. HERE is direct historical evidence, authenticating the adherence of the incredulous Jews of the FIRST century to the chronology of the Hebrew Pentateuch, in direct contradiction to those of the Christian Fathers, whose authority is alleged for the first introduction of

* Bp. Watson's Theological Tracts, vol. iii. p. 56.

the abbreviated reckoning in the SECOND century. The truth is, that the Christian Fathers were themselves the heretics of that age, as far as the computation of times is concerned. Except on this one principle, the plenary inspiration of the Alexandrian interpreters, it never can be affirmed, that Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem in, or about, the year of the world 5500. The Hebrew notations connect this memorable event with the close of the ivth millenary. But if this latter date be rejected the attribute of inspiration is transferred from Moses to these interpreters,—a set of men whose names were never recorded in history, of whose abilities their version gives a very contemptible specimen, and whose want of principle, in giving their sanction to the absurd fictions of paganism, in opposition to the authority of a venerable record, (which they were under sacred obligations to translate with fidelity), transmits their infamy to all ages.

9. OBVIOUS are the reasons, which induced first the Hellenist Jews, and afterward those Christians who had abjured gentilism, to prefer the Greek version of the Old Testament to the original Hebrew. One motive, as self evident, supercedes a train of arguments ; both parties were totally ignorant of the language, in which the sacred oracles had been composed.

THE posterity of those Jews, who accompanied Onias, the first high priest of the temple built in Egypt, like to that at Jerusalem, during the reign of Ptolemy Philometor, having acquired the Greek tongue, which had become vernacular over the whole Macedo-
Egyptian

Egyptian Empire, entirely forgot the Hebrew. For this reason the scriptures, according to the Greek version, were universally read in that temple, in all the synagogues, and in all the private families, of the land.

WHEN the gospel was first preached in Egypt, Syria, and other provinces where the Greek language was spoken, the apostles, and other Christian missionaries, went into the synagogues, and preached the doctrine of the cross. Wherever they found disciples, appeals were made to those Greek scriptures which testified of Christ; because their hearers understood no other. Hence easy it is to account for the quick reception of the Septuagint Bible, and its universal use, both in the Jewish and Christian assemblies, dispersed over the kingdom of the Greeks.

IT is, however to be observed, that neither the one party, nor the other knew the distinction between the chronology of the Hebrew original, and of the Greek version. Without the least suspicion of an attachment, in the translators, to the exorbitant computations of the gentiles, they implicitly received the notations of years expressed in that version.

THE Jews, who continued in Palestine from the reign of Cyrus to the Christian era, natural it is to suppose, retained for a much longer space of time the use of their mother-tongue, and the reading of their original Scriptures; nor does it appear that they generally preferred the enlarged chronology of the Hellenists, before the time of their total dispersion.

10. AFTER the overthrow of Jerusalem, Rome became the mother church. Before the end of the first

century nearly the whole of the scriptures was published in Latin *, which, under the title of the ITALIC VERSION, taken from the LXX. was most probably read in the Roman church from the Apostolical age for several centuries. Hence is inferred the almost universal predilection of the Christian Fathers, in favour of the Greek chronology. In the fourth century Jerom, dissatisfied on this account, (perhaps, among others), with that version, prepared an entire new translation from the Hebrew, and consequently restored the primitive Mosaical computation. Thus was the ITALIC VERSION superseded by a substitute, which the synod at Trent pronounced CANONICAL.

“ THE whole Christian church, eastern and western, and all the ancient celebrated writers of the church, neglected the Hebrew computations, and adhered to the Greek; till in the late century, some, but not all of the Roman writers, in regard to the decree of the council of Trent about the vulgar Latin, took to the Hebrew computations, not because they were the Hebrew, but because the vulgar Latin agreed with them. Baronius observes, that the church used anciently to compute the years from the creation, not according to the Hebrew, but according to the Septuagint, and cites many authors to confirm it. He might justly have cited every ancient writer, except St. Jerom and St. Austin. Among the moderns, Beza was the first that had any doubts about the Greek chronology; I say, *had doubts*, for he never absolutely rejected it, though he seemed more

* Gregory's Church History, vol. i. p. 70.

inclined to the Hebrew. A few followed his opinion ; and they are but a few, in comparison of the many that have gone the other way *.”

IN times more liberal, and consequently less perilous, Usher brought the subject to the test of cool dispassionate criticism, and decided in favour of the Hebrew notations. This conclusion, the result of proofs judiciously chosen, and fairly stated, was happily satisfactory to the learned of every denomination : the protestant churches having concurred with the popish, in the article of a truly scriptural chronology, without the least suspicion of swerving from the principles of the reformation, which seems to account for the timid caution of Theodore Beza.

ABOUT the middle of the past century was the reformed chronology exemplified, in the worthy Primate's ANNALS of the OLD and NEW TESTAMENT. But after a few years Isaac Vossius revived the controversy, and by the injudicious zeal of several learned and eminently good men, during the passing century, is the erroneous system restored. As an antidote to the permanent and general prevalence of a scheme, so incompatible with the integrity of the Hebrew Pentateuch, the author of the RESEARCHES undertakes to produce direct historical evidence that the protracted chronology was first fabricated in the very formation of the Greek version ;—and to evince, that the concise reckoning of Moses allows sufficient time for the population requisite

* Shuckford, vol. i. p. 61.

to construct the tower of Babel, if the dispersion be referred to the later years of Peleg's life, as the words of the sacred historian naturally admit this sense, and not to the time of his birth. On this principle too it will appear evident, that, in the 75th of Abraham's age, 427 years after the Flood, the account of great kingdoms, magnificent cities, &c. then said to exist, is perfectly consistent with the course of nature, and improvement in arts.—If these positions can be verified, no plausible pretext will remain for the utility of the expanded computation.

IN the following sheets a subject coeval with time, and wide as the planetary system, is exhibited in miniature. It is an attempt to erect Ancient History on a firm and permanent basis, — an original epoch in reckoning, and to ascertain the lengths of those fixed terms in computation, of which the sum defines the past age of the world, at any given period. Thus are events, prior, co-existent, or successive, disposed in their natural order. For these ends the Hebrew books, the most ancient and best attested in the world, are presumed to afford the most certain intelligence.

FROM the gradual improvements in natural knowledge, these oracles of inspiration derive an accession of evidence in every age. By critical skill in ancient tongues and usages, the sacred phraseology acquires precision and significance. Reason is congenial with faith, and even science gives her sanction to revealed truth. Astronomy and Chronology, applied to the Sacred History are, happily subservient to establish the

belief of a wise, merciful, and just Providence superintending the Universe. If at any time, emergent perplexities occur, to surmount which these useful arts are inadequate, Genealogy suggests such arrangements, as correspond to the term of natural life, in the various periods of time.

By several authors of eminent abilities and learning, have the genealogies from the first to the second Adam been examined, but successfully adjusted by none. From Jacob to the dissolution of the Hebrew monarchy numerous are the sources of uncertainty : and as far as the writer's knowledge extends, the period from Solomon to Josiah has been overlooked by all the critics and expositors. In this ANALYSIS the principal difficulties have been obviated, and, it is hoped, consistently with the course of nature.

REVEALED religion is not now to be considered as a matter of doubtful disputation ;—an institution which needs the benefit of an APOLOGY. This word implies, imperfection, if not demerit. It has stood the test of TIME, which, aided by the increase of knowledge, never fails to expose the fallacies of imposture, and set forth the lustre of truth. If several parts of the historical scriptures be not yet clearly understood, certain it is, that nature, providence, and grace, have one origin and Lord ; and though mysteries occur wherever we direct our thoughts or eyes, we may trust, that TIME will yet unfold many secrets of unsearchable wisdom, long before the final result of things, when order and harmony shall crown all the works of God.

To

To the pursuit and discovery of truth, fashionable modes of thinking, and the prejudices of hostile parties, have ever been unfavourable. This remark is fatally exemplified in the history of the Pagans, Jews, and Christians. The Pagans, censured the Jews because their sacred rites and national laws were *diverse* from all people: and the Jews hated the Pagans, whom they very uncharitably pronounced the *profane* and *accursed* out-casts from the divine favour. One grievous consequence of predominant degeneracy, among the heathen tribes, was the loss of primeval tradition; and then *vain imaginations* supplied the want of *true history*. Generations and reigns, multiplied at pleasure, suggested the notion of enormous antiquity. This was the prevailing foible of the gentile empires, about the time when the oracles of history and prophecy ceased among the Hebrews, which was the era, or dawn of alphabetical composition, over the wide domains of paganism: and that foible had become both extravagant and epidemical, in the age, when the Medo-Persian Empire fell.

WHEN the Alexandrian interpreters set about their version of the Mosaical volumes, the Egyptians had previously claimed, by immemorial prescription, an origin of 36,000 years prior to Cambyfes; nay Cicero reports, that they boasted of celestial observations during the lapse of 470,000 years *. Those interpreters, considering their kingdom as one of the oldest

* De Divin. l. i.

in the world, wished to impart to the Hebrews, whose religion they professed, a small moiety of the reputation derived from antiquity; and in the manner already set forth, enlarged the times prior to Abraham, by the addition of 15 fictitious centuries. This is one instance of fashionable opinions, in their unhappy influence to mislead the minds of men. Other examples are in reserve.

II. A FORMER hint must here be repeated. Those Hellenist Jews, who had been instructed in the religion of Moses, and with it in the language of Greece, were generally unacquainted with that in which the Pentateuch, and subsequent volumes of the sacred canon, had been composed. They therefore could not discover the frauds of the translators, in amplifying the years of the patriarchal genealogies. Not incongruous with reason or probability is the surmise, that some individuals, at least, of those Hellenists, or that multitudes of their descendants, embraced the gospel. Such proselytes from Judaism to Christianity, doubtless continued as ignorant as before, of the primitive Mosaical chronology; and to the writings of Moses and the Prophets, as then extant in the Greek tongue, were they referred for the things concerning the character of Christ. Be it not supposed, that Jesus or his apostles appeared in that age to give the sanction to any one scheme of Chronology. Much more august were the objects of their commission. Besides, the true chronological numbers, entire and unvitiated, were then, as now, extant in the Hebrew Pentateuch, the sole and supreme standard

standard for computation in every age. The fact here principally intended is the force of early discipline, and of immemorial prescription, on the minds of individuals, sects, and successive generations.

It remains to consider the hostile spirit of faction, in its baneful tendency to pervert the human judgement.

Of the Christian Fathers a very great majority was better acquainted with the Greek, than the Hebrew Bible, and most probably the incredulous Jews of Palestine, in the first century of our era. During the currency of that one century, it may be presumed, the controversy was first broached, concerning the time fore-ordained for the appearance of the Messiah: and the tradition already mentioned seems to have been common to both parties;—that the sixth millenary of the world was the proper date; and, by the Greek computation, the then current century was about the center, or intermediate point, of that age, A. M. 5500.

PRESSED with this perplexing difficulty, the Rabbis of that time, who were best acquainted with the Hebrew notations, betook themselves to the study of the original, and first discovered the profane dissimulation of the Alexandrian interpreters. Thus furnished with well-tempered weapons from the Sacred Armory, these Rabbis might, as they very probably did, argue with the Christians, that in perfect harmony with the genuine Chronology of the world, as stated by Moses, 2000 years were then to elapse before the appearance of the Messiah. Both parties misunderstood the SCRIPTURES to which they severally appealed. The Jews erred in deferring

the advent of their Prince, to the end of the sixth millenary, and the Christians, in adding 15 nominal centuries to the then age of the world. The natural effect of such remonstrances would have been conviction on both sides. But the Jews continued incredulous, and the Christians falsely charged their antagonists with the sacrilegious guilt of mutilating their chronology, to elude the characters of time which defined the advent of the Messiah.

12. JACKSON, with our other modern patrons of the Greek chronology, refers to certain records, where it is affirmed, that the Jews kept a yearly festival in honour of the old Greek version, and in pious thankfulness for so great a blessing ; but that about A. D. 130, they not only declared it to be full of errors, and forbade the reading of it ; but also kept a solemn Fast on the 8th day of Tebeth, in order to curse the memory of its being then made *.

ON the authority of Philo, a contemporary writer, it is but equitable to admit the fact ; because it is not rendered doubtful by contradictory evidence ; but the assigned reason, favouring so strongly of calumny and of virulence, may justly merit reprobation. Inveterate prejudice steels the heart, so as to obstruct and defeat the operations of sweet humanity, to violate all the regards due to that inviolable, that awful, that sacred thing, TRUTH ; and to arm the hand, that organ of skill, power, and mercy, with the bloody weapons of persecution.

* Kennicott, Dissert. ii. p. 366.

MAY it not be presumed, with every signature of truth, that the Jews, yet declared enemies to the doctrine of the cross, convinced that the Alexandrine version of the Pentateuch (from certain sinister motives had been wrested to a partial conformity with the licentious computations of paganism) had detected the gross prejudices of the unprincipled translators, in favour of an incredibly remote antiquity ; and, in consequence of a discovery, at once so unexpected and important, employed Aquila to prepare a Greek version less repugnant to the original. That translation was published, and, in process of time, two more by Theodotion and Symmachus, (all within the space of 70 years, ending A. D. 200), in which the genealogical numbers agree in quantity with the Hebrew texts. “ It is remarkable, that Eusebius Emisenus who flourished about A. D. 340, mentions Symmachus, (and not Aquila or Theodotion), *as always putting 100 years LESS, in the ancient generations*, agreeably to the Hebrew ; so that if the Hebrew chronology was [were] contracted, it was probably done in the interval between Theodotion and Symmachus.” The above assertion of Eusebius is given by Montfaucon in his Prelimin. Dissert. p. 54 *.

13. THIS assertion of Eusebius Emisenus, though approved by Montfaucon and Kennicott, no less merits rejection, than the slander raised by the Christian Fathers against the Jews of the second century, that they mutilated the genealogical notations in their Pen-

* Kennicott, ii. 369.

tateuch. On testimonies which are highly respectable, and reasons superior to every suspicion of ambiguity, it is maintained, that, after the overthrow of Jerusalem, it was absolutely impossible for the Jews to corrupt, by a national deed, their canonical records. At so recent a period the *mutilation* of their chronology would have availed them nothing. As they acknowledged, that their promised Deliverer had not appeared, a project to *amplify* their chronology would much better have served their purpose. Besides, had they curtailed the years of all the copies in their possession, an equal number, at least, was in the hands of the Christians, who would not suffer so glaring a corruption to pass without spirited remonstrances.

14. ON the whole, whatever reasonable and generous allowance should be made for (here and there) a wilful error by a single hand, or for incidental oversights in the multiplication of transcripts, the Jews were faithful depositaries of their sacred books. The Samaritans enlarged the times in their copy of the Pentateuch, the Alexandrians in their version, and moreover basely inserted a spurious patriarch *. But in other respects the Hebrew chronology has been (by the signal favour of a watchful Providence) transmitted pure, entire, and safe, to the passing generation, at the commencement of the 59th century from the creation.

15. THIS prefatory address could not more appositely end than with the following quotation from a late profi-

* The second Cainan.

cient in Sacred Criticism. “The light, that arose upon the Christian world at the Reformation, hath still continued to increase, and we trust *will shine more and more, unto the perfect day*. The labours of the learned have, from that time, by the blessing of God upon the free exercise of reason and private judgement, been greatly successful in promoting religious knowledge ; and particularly in laying open the hidden treasures of divine wisdom, contained in the HOLY SCRIPTURES. Much hath *been* done in this important work, and much still remains to *be* done. Those heavenly stores are inexhaustible : every new acquisition leads on to new discoveries ; and the most careful search will still leave enough to invite, and reward the repeated researches of the pious and industrious, to the latest ages. This is a work that demands our first and most earnest regard ; the studies and assistance, the favour and encouragement of all. To confirm and illustrate THESE holy writings, to evince their truth, to shew their consistency, to explain their meaning, to make them more generally known and studied, more easily and perfectly understood, by all ; to remove difficulties, which discourage the honest endeavours of the unlearned, and provoke the malicious cavils of the half-learned :—this is the most worthy object that can engage our attention ; the most important end, to which our labours, in the search of truth, can be directed. Here I cannot but mention, that nothing would more effectually conduce to this end, than the exhibiting of the Holy Scriptures themselves to the people,

people, in a more advantageous and just light, by an accurate REVIVAL of our vulgar translation, by public authority. This hath often been represented; and I hope will not *always* be represented in *vain* *."

* Dr. Lowth's Visitation Sermon at Durham, 1758.

ERRORS CORRECTED.

P. L.				P. L.	For	Read.
17.	22.	after \approx	}	153.	7. Rabbitical	Rabbinical.
		expunge I.		159.	18. 4th	8th.
69.	5.	Read	-	443.	295.	4. Hezekiah's Jofiah's
	6.	-	-	454.	303.	7. admit omit.
	10.	-	-	465.	353.	14. federeal fidereal.
	11.	-	-	476.	381.	23. affectus affatus.
	12.	-	-	477.	383.	23. Prolate Prelate.
					401.	12. Amaziah Uzzi.h.

Shuah, p. 27. is twice said to have been the wife of Judah; but by Gen. xxxviii. 2. and 1 Chron. ii. 3. the patriarch married a daughter of that Canaanites.

N. B. For other mistakes, if any such be, the Reader's indulgence is requested.

(1)

PROPOSALS

FOR

PRINTING *by* SUBSCRIPTION,

RESEARCHES *into the Origin and Progress of*
Historical Time, from the Creation to the Demise
of Tiberius Nero.

IN THREE PARTS.

I. **P** R I N C I P L E S of computation by natural and instituted measures ; — days, weeks, lunations, equinoxes, solstices ; — single years, natural and civil, common and bissextile, lunar, luni-solar, solar-tropical, sidereal, historical, prophetic ; — festivals of the Jewish worship ; — years in combination or circulating periods ; the olympiad and lustrum, sabbatical years and jubiles, cycles of the sun and moon, eclipses, with their repetitions ; — fixed periods, more remarkable epochs in the sacred and gentile history ; rise and fall of ancient empires ; — chronological stile, the Gregorian adjusted to the Astronomical standard, and continued back from the time of the Nicene council to the Christian era ; thence to the origin of measured time. To all these measures are applied the generations of men, the duration of magistracies, reigns, pontificates, and other supreme or subordinate dignities.

II. **H** I S T O R I C A L Arrangements from Adam to the accession of Caligula, in the year after the crucifixion ; —

A

com-

comprehending occasional strictures on the chronological schemes of Petau, Scaliger, Isaac Vossius, Sir W. Raleigh, Sir J. Marsham, Sir I. Newton ; Archbishop Usher ; Bishops Beveridge, Clayton, Cumberland, Loyd, Mann, Newcome, Pearse, Pearson, Richardson, Squire ; the Reverend A. Bedford, Blair, Jackson, Kennedy, Kennicott, Playfair, Priestly, Strauchius, Whiston ;—as also on Grotius, Pilkington, Trapp, Yardley, and other writers on the sacred genealogies ; Payley on sabbatical institutions.

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DISSERT. I. On the dates of the books, in which is contained the history of the Old and New Testament.

2. CHRONOLOGY of the Hebrews and Gentiles compared with respect to authority, genuineness, and truth.

3. EXAMINATION of the genealogical numbers in the Samaritan and Greek Pentateuch, Josephus, and others, discordant with the Hebrew notations, prior to the birth of Abraham.

4. HISTORY of the Sabbath from the primeval week to that of Christ's resurrection.

5. TRUE times of the Hebrew festivals from the first Passover in Egypt, to the last in Christ's ministry.

6. ORIGIN of alphabetical composition and national records.

7. MEANS

7. MEANS of preserving traditional knowledge, prior to the era of written language.

8. GRADUAL preparations for the introduction of the gospel.

ILLUSTRATED with astronomical calculations, and chronological tables. The whole intended for an improvement of Archbishop Usher's Annals, and Sir I. Newton's Chronology.

By the Rev. ROBERT WALKER, Rector of Shingham, Norfolk.

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SOME readers may pronounce every attempt to erect the fabric of ancient Universal History, on the basis of Astronomical Chronology, a visionary project, to the execution of which the human faculties are inadequate. In the presumption, that the scheme is practicable, the author proceeded to collect materials, which he found to be various, suitable to the proposed end, and sufficient to enforce conviction. To facilitate the study of sacred literature, by evincing that the objections, daily

urged against the credibility of the Holy Oracles, rise from ignorance and sophistry, was his prevailing motive to this arduous enterprize.

OF truth in all its modifications God is the original source, and all his works it pervades. Nature, Providence, and Grace, are distinct departments of one grand and complex, but harmonious scheme, in which are differences of administrations, but the same Lord ; and diversities of operations, but the same God, who worketh all in all : that is, whose all powerful energy conducts to admirable and beneficial ends, the separate and combined tendencies of secondary causes, and subordinate means ; not to speak of moral agents, contributing their aid, without knowledge, and often beyond their intention.

IN the fashionable phraseology, nature is an independent principle, and providence, chance.—Words, as thus applied, are without a meaning. Grace too is exploded by the professed pupils of fatality, as the chimera of superstition and imposture. But if the universe be the result of Essential Perfection, if the events of time be overruled by all-directing Wisdom, and if the discoveries contained in the Bible were indeed vouchsafed by the “ Father of Lights, who appointed the sun, moon, and stars, their circuits in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night, and to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years,” the obvious inference is, “ That NATURE and PROVIDENCE are subservient to the dispensation of GRACE.” If the three modes of government have one common object,
as

as they have one common Lord, a perfect harmony of operation is supposable, in the means, causes, and effects, employed during all the intermediate stages.

THE Sacred Annals, together with the Prophetical Oracles, define with scientific precision the interval, in days, weeks, months, and astronomical years, from Adam to the reign of Caligula; nay foretel such events as are now fulfilling, or yet to be fulfilled, prior to the consummation of things. No where else is a primary source of computation to be found. This interval is subdivided into distinct parts, each of a determinate length, and all conducive both to the ease and certainty of reckoning;—for example,

FROM Adam to Noah; hence to Abraham, and from him to Moses, is the patriarchal economy continued, and the several periods circumscribed within limits characterised by defined astronomical quantities.

IN like manner is ascertained the space from Moses to Joshua, and from the intermediate judges, to Samuel; whence the computation proceeds by Kings to the rise of the Chaldean monarchy.

THE canonical history of the Jews ends about 440 years before the crucifixion, that is, half a century after the commencement of the famous seventy prophetic weeks: 368 years from the restoration of the Olympiad, 345 from the Varronian era, and 339 from that of Nabonassar. By the seventy prophetic weeks is the chronological chain continued, from the first point in measured time, without the loss of one link; and by these three notable eras of the gentiles, is the

Sacred History brought into astronomical connexion with that of the pagan empires, in continuous succession, and co-existent periods.

CHRISTIANITY, or the doctrine of grace, is not quite so ancient as the creation. But it certainly did commence immediately with the apostacy in paradise. Before sin entered into the world, the luminaries had begun their courses, and by their periodical revolutions are measured, with an exactness, which extends to the minutest fractional parts of time, those intermediate ages from the prime source of computation to the very day, when the second Adam rose from the grave, to an endless life and universal dominion.

THOUGH it is not affirmed, that a distinct knowledge of the chronological characters, in the Bible, is of equal importance and necessity with belief in the doctrines and facts of Revelation; yet, if the veracity of the sacred writers can be established on the basis of demonstrative science, it must appear, that the objections, still urged against the credibility of the holy oracles, are the offspring of ignorance and sophistry.

FOR evincing the certainty of the Bible History, *Genealogy* is an essential ingredient. During the first three ages of the world, that is, from the creation to the Exodus, the sum of the intervals in family descents is the past duration of the planetary system. In ascertaining this criterion of chronological truth, one axiom is fundamental: "The age of procreation must accord with the standard of natural life, in the several ages of the world." This axiom merits exemplification.

I. "ALL

1. "ALL the days of Jared were 962 years, and he died." This notation harmonises with that other chronological character, which connects the birth of Enoch with the 262d year of the same Jared.

2. FROM the birth of Arphaxad to that of Nahor the grandfather of Abraham, (seven generations), the usual standard of natural life was between 250 and 300 years, and the common age of procreation 30, *plus minus*. These arrangements are congruous with the course of nature. But in the generations, after Nahor, the ultimate period of mortality was compressed within less protracted limits; and, at the same time, the mean proportion of generations was extended to 60 years and upwards, in the line at least of Terah by Abraham. That, in all the other families of Noah's progeny, and even those in the line of Shem by Haran and Nahor, the sons of Terah, procreation made a less rapid progress, during a series of generations, is not credible. But probable reasons may be assigned for a longer space between descents in the families of Isaac and Jacob, than of Ishmael and Esau. Here a minute specification would be improper.

3. AFTER Terah was the standard of natural life comprised within the space of two centuries; yet if the reckoning be continued from Judah exclusively to the descent into Egypt, he was the grandfather of two twins, Hezron and Hamul, by Pharez, the youngest of four sons, at the time of that descent: scarcely half a century. The improbable circumstances are;—

Judah's marriage was not solemnised before the 27th year of his age ;—neither was Pharez born before the expiration of 20 years more, and $27 + 20 = 47$: which obvious and short operation continues the reckoning to within two years of Jacob's removal with his whole family from Palestine to Egypt ; in which expedition, Pharez, Hezron, and Hamul, are mentioned among the threescore and six souls who accompanied Jacob and his descendants, from the 12 patriarchs. Much more natural it is to postulate, that these and many other names, now extant in the xlvth chapter of Genesis, were taken from records of a subsequent date, to fill up deficient names.

4. THE generations posterior to the ~~entrance into~~ *Exodus* ~~Canaan~~, and prior to the birth of David, are but four, and the interval in time 406 years ; each son must therefore have been born at or after the 100th of his father's life. In four successive instances such incidents are improbable, especially on the popular hypothesis, that natural life was reduced to its present standard so early as the egress from Egypt. Such incoherent principles and contradictory decisions, sound criticism must not only explode, but re-establish self-consistent truths.

FROM natural phenomena the sacred annals derive confirmation. Memorials of a deluge once universal exist in every climate. The accomplishment of predictions, which threatened the desolation of several cities, some of them never to be rebuilt, is recorded in authentic history, though difficult it is to ascertain the names of some, or the site of others. Of many notable terms

terms in computation, commemorative ordinances were appointed at the time, and remain to this day ;—the weekly sabbath from the creation, the Passover and other periodical solemnities of Judaism from the Exodus, the Feast of Purim, &c. No such credentials occur in the annals of paganism. The vaunted achievements of Semiramis, Sesostris, Alexander, Augustus, &c. are not perpetuated by memorials, in a continuous series, from the ages in which they lived to the present times.

THE antiquities of Egypt have been carried thousands of years beyond those of the Hebrews; those of Chaldea, hundreds of thousands; and those of China, millions; but their wildly exorbitant computations rest on no scientific principles. Their several dynasties, constructed without regard to a first point of reckoning, to natural measures of time, or combinations of its integral parts; to generations, in a continued progression; or to historical incidents; exhibit every aspect of allegory, fiction, and deliberate forgery.

WITH the like characters of incredibility, though of an inferior degree, is the chronology of the Gr. Pentateuch chargeable. It enlarges the count of years from Adam to Abraham by almost fifteen centuries. Not the least vestige of evidence occurs, or can be produced, to justify the conjecture, that the Mosaic numbers in the fifth and eleventh chapters of Genesis were greater in the days of Ptolemy Philadelphus than in our Bibles now; or that they have been abbreviated in the intermediate ages. The Alexandrian Translators,
mised

misled by the incredible antiquity, which the Egyptian priests ascribed to their monarchy, rashly adventured to falsify the true Mosaic chronology, not by changing the genuine numerical notations, but by adding one century to the age of several patriarchs at the nativity of their specified sons. In the ivth century of the Christian era was the fraud discovered, and in part rectified, by Jerome, in his vulgate Latin version. His authority, however, was inadequate to remove the prejudices in favour of a scheme established by prescription. The Jews at last, adhering to the Mosaic text, withdrew their regard from its faulty version; and the western churches of Christendom, adopting Jerome's Latin Pentateuch, received unawares the true Hebrew chronology. Yet the Protestants at the Reformation generally approved the amplified numbers of the Alexandrian interpreters. About the middle of the past century, A. B. Usher restored the Hebrew computation, which Whiston and certain later writers have ventured once more to explode. Were this version, now preferred to the original, in every other respect superior to reprehension, in one view it is exceptionable. Moses was the first who instructed mankind concerning the origin of the world, the time of its formation, and the history of the first ages. No stress is here laid on the evidences which authenticate his special and peculiar commission, to testify that the universe is the production of wisdom, goodness, and power, all adequate to the existing phenomena. With respect to priority of time, harmony of parts, congruity with nature,

and

and every circumstance of credibility, whether intrinsic or adventitious, his report has every criterion of truth. Neither the Scribes who executed the Samaritan copy, nor the commissioners who fabricated the Greek version, and, from sinister views, corrupted the original numbers of the Pentateuch, have the least claim to implicit belief, much less to preferable credit. On the moral character of witnesses always depends the validity of their testimony. That of Moses is superior to every suspicion of deficient or fallacious materials, artfully connected to mislead a credulous multitude.

WHAT though his account of events and dates was not compiled from records of former times! Originality is not an infallible criterion of imposture. Counterfeit coin implies a pre-existent model. It must be noted, that Moses could not impose on his contemporaries a fictitious history. By his arrangements above 2500 years had elapsed from the creation to the passage over the Red Sea. From Adam to Noah tradition had passed through but 9 stages in $15\frac{1}{2}$ centuries, a term scarcely equivalent to three of our generations, as now compressed within the limits of a single century. Shem the son of Noah lived five centuries after the birth of his son Arphaxad, and consequently died in the 60th of Isaac, which is the year of Jacob's birth, co-incident with A. M. 2159. Levi, the son of Jacob, conversed with his own grandson, Amram, the father of Moses. So that from Jacob to Moses, both excluded, are but two generations during the lapse of 420 years before the Exodus;—a period, not much exceeding

exceeding 60 years of traditional history. As the memory of the patriarchs, collectively, was in the ages prior to alphabetical composition, the treasury of authentic historical truth, impossible it was for Moses to escape detection, if he had pretended to contradict the universal report of uncorrupted tradition.

INCREDULITY may still remonstrate, that tradition could not preserve pure and unvitiated the contents of the Mosaical history, during the currency of twenty-five centuries.

IT is replied, that the history of the world's origin could not be known without a supernatural communication. To Adam it was first of all revealed. Who will venture to deny, that it was, if need were, repeated to Moses? A late * translator of the primeval history scruples to admit the divine inspiration of the writer. Let him enjoy all the credit and comfort of his own paradox.

IN the writings of Moses, as in the other volumes of the sacred code, are recorded many things, which human sagacity could not foresee. The Lawgiver of the Hebrews, in particular, foretold the specific punishments reserved for that people, if they should degenerate into idolatrous practices, and reject the GREAT PROPHET, to be raised up from among their brethren. They contracted that guilt, and underwent the awful judgements, which had been denounced. The dispersed and forlorn condition of their posterity, at this day,

* Geddes.

bears witness to the prophetic character of the first historian. As without a divine impulse he could not predict the events of a remote futurity, it cannot be incongruous to suppose, that, in composing the history of 25 past centuries, he was under the influence of supernatural direction.

DURING the late century, the patrons of sacred literature signified their wish to have all the existing manuscripts of the original Hebrew and Greek texts of both Testaments carefully compared, that some one copy, worthy to be admitted as the standard of textual purity, might be compiled from many, and retain the verity which pervades all. By the laudable industry and skill of several accomplished masters in sacred criticism, have the sanguine hopes of the Protestant churches been amply gratified, and not without the concurrence of the learned in the Romish communion.

SOME of the reasons urged for collating manuscript and printed copies, versions, (ancient and modern), quotations, &c. merited immediate regard, and liberal encouragement. Others specious, but nugatory, captivated the attention of the public; and by a kind of disastrous fatality, “the *worse* appeared the *better reason*, to perplex and dash maturest counsels.” For the preference of the amplified Greek chronology to the very moderate Hebrew notations, the arguments are, “as the drop from a bucket, small dust in the balance, and less than nothing.” Of a minute scrutiny, the result was a perfect harmony between all the chronological characters from Adam to Terah. Yet, as if the Hebrew
numbers

numbers had, as uniformly contradictory and meritorious of reprobation, forfeited every claim to probability ; the report of the Greek translators, vague as it generally is, and, in its chronology, convicted of deliberate and wilful forgery, is set forth by Whiston, Brett, Hay, Jackson, Kennicott, and Geddes, as the primary model of chronological precision.

EVERY friend to the human race, and to christianity, which comprehends the interest of the whole species, must derive pure complacence from the continually multiplying editions of the English Bible from the British press. Many of them, as specimens of elaborate mechanism, superfine paper, elegant types, superb binding, exquisite sculptures, and other exterior decorations, solicit and obtain extensive and liberal encouragement.

It is with deference submitted to the judgement of an impartial and discerning Public, what regard may be due to Proposals, of which the ultimate object is to accomplish Sir Isaac Newton's arduous enterprize, so as to make Sacred History suit with itself, with the Annals of Paganism, with the natural measures of time, with national eras, with the course of nature in the generations of men, and with civil magistracies.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN an age when the natural measures of time are exactly ascertained, and the arts of computation reduced to systematical precision, it may seem a paradox, that these arts have never been applied to those measures, with a degree of success which infallibly determines the past duration of the world.

CHRONOLOGY can be carried no farther back than the most remote point in historical time. All beyond is the region of pure astronomical operations, which mark imaginary limits in antemundan duration.

THE vulgar Christian Era, with respect to which all dates are denominated prior or subsequent, is, by immemorial prescription, accounted the center of astronomical calculations. For example, from the first of January A. D. 1795, count back 1794 solar tropical years, the reckoning is carried up to January 1st in the number of the Julian period 4714, where the era begins with unity. Hence continue the retrograde series of natural years up to that first point, which Moses calls the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth;—THERE measured Time begins.

Computation may proceed farther, if the existence of the planetary system be supposed: but beyond the primary source of measured duration, divided into distinct portions, by the revolving luminaries, neither chronology nor history can proceed.

How is the quantity of this retrograde series defined? By fixed periods, extending progressively from the origin of things, to the time of the crucifixion. The historical records of the Hebrews, it is true, leave a void space of more than four centuries, prior to the annals of the New Testament. But this apparent deficiency is abundantly compensated, by the infallible oracles of prophecy, which specify an interval of 490 years, to commence with a certain date, subsequent to the return of the captives from Babylon, and to end with the cutting off of the Messiah. The series in the retrograde order, is thus completed:

From the Crucifixion,

To the date of Ezra's Commission	-	490
Overthrow of Jerusalem and the Temple		130
Foundation of the first Temple	-	426
Release from Egypt	-	480
Date of the sojourning in Canaan and Egypt	-	430
Termination of the Deluge	-	428
Creation	-	1656
		<hr/> 4040

It is to be noted, that the computation begins with the time of the vernal equinox in the year of our Lord's passion; and therefore ends with the same cardinal point in the first year of the world, though six months after

after the creation ; for at the Exodus was introduced a change of stile, by which the seventh month of the primitive year, as anciently computed, became the first, as then altered : “ This month shall be unto you the beginning of months ; it shall be the first month of the year.”

By the Julian calendar, every Hebrew year, counted from one autumnal equinox to another, falls in with two numbers of the Julian period. The first year of the world therefore expired the 31st December 706 ; and the second began January 707. By this rule, the time of the crucifixion coincided with the seventh month of the year 4041 from the creation. Hence deduct 37, the current year of Christ’s life, the time of his nativity is connected with 4004.

THE presumed uncertainty of an infallible standard in computation has long perplexed chronologers. In the Hebrew Annals the notations of time have every reasonable claim to preference. That those which define the interval from Adam to Abraham have been egregiously corrupted, by mutilation or accident, hath often been affirmed, but never proved. The numbers in the vth and xith chapters of Genesis, as exhibited in the Greek version, exceed those in the Hebrew original by about 1500 years. But the translators, in compliance with that epidemical affectation of a remote origin, which THEN had become prevalent among the Gentile nations, enlarged, (by one century each), the age of fifteen patriarchs at the birth of their specified sons. Impelled by the same vanity, Josephus, having the Hebrew text full in his view, preferred the

exaggerated chronology of these interpreters, under the false pretence of translating faithfully from the original. The Samaritan copy differs from both, sometimes by defect, sometimes by excess; but none of all the three is of equal authority with the genuine Hebrew Annals.

OF the world's origin Moses gave the first, and the only authentic account; and thence to the year of his own death continued the history in an orderly series of striking events, intermixed, or rather inseparably connected with such decisive characters of time, as define the past duration of the world, at the entrance into Canaan. The whole interval is 2554 astronomical years, six months.

WITH equal signatures of precision, and without one vacant space, is the chronology of the Hebrews professedly, and of the Pagan nations incidentally continued from one stage to another. Where the history by Moses ends, there that by Joshua begins, not without obvious hints of a continuation. In the same manner is the line of chronological order prolonged in the history of the Judges, including that of Ruth, to the death of Samson. In the two books of Samuel, and the first of the Kings, is the history of Samuel's government, with that of the first two monarchs, described, in a regular series of events, and with requisite notations of time. In the 4th of Solomon were the foundations of the Temple laid, during the currency of the 480th year from the Exodus. Deduct the 40 years spent in the desert; the interval from the passage over Jordan is 440: and $440 + 2554 = 2994$, which
sum

sum is the age of the world in full years, not including the 4th of Solomon, whence a new term in computation begins.

FROM the 4th of Solomon to the 3d of Jehoiakim, both included, is a period of 408 years. Add the 70 years of the captivity ; $408 + 70 = 478 + 2994 = 3472$, the age of the world at the return from Babylon, excluding the first of Cyrus.

FROM Darius the Mede to the 15th of Darius Nottus, beyond which the canonical records of the Hebrews do not extend, the intermediate space is 128 years, which bring down the computation to A. M. 3600.

THIS long period with respect to the Hebrews, (no part being UNKNOWN or FABULOUS) is all purely HISTORICAL. It has been pronounced an imperfection in the Hebrew annals, that the history contained in them can be authenticated by no collateral testimony. But neither can it be disproved by authentic records of equal antiquity, and credit. Paganism had neither oracles, nor national histories, of so early a date, or so well attested.

As the final period of the Hebrew monarchy drew nigh, the sacred writers had the precaution, or, rather, were supernaturally directed, to connect their national chronology with that of the co-existent Pagan states. For instance, Josiah was contemporary with Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt :—the 4th of Jehoiakim was the 1st of Nebuchadnezzar ; whose 18th was the 10th of Zedekiah :—In the 1st of Cyrus were the Jews honourably dismissed from Babylon :—in the 6th of

Darius Hyftaspis was the second temple finished:— in the 7th of Artaxerxes Longimanus did Ezra receive his commission; Nehemiah his in the 20th. These and the like notations, though seemingly incidental, are of signal use in connecting the Jewish history with that of the Gentiles. To the same important end are the several chronological eras of paganism eminently subservient;—the Greek Olympiad, the Varonian Epochs of Rome, Nabonassar, the Seleucidæ; Ptolemy's Mathematical Syntaxis, &c.

In the long interval from Nehemiah to the Evangelists, (and indeed ever after the return from Babylon), the Jews having become tributary to the four monarchies in succession, their history is intermixed, with that of the nations among whom they were dispersed; and is yet extant in the writings, which have been transmitted, either in part or entire, to the present age. Certain fragments of their story, no where else to be found, are preserved in the two Apocryphal books of the Maccabees. Josephus, the glory of his nation, in its last period, has exhibited a perpetual commentary on the inspired historical books, and a continuation of the national annals, collected with great industry and judgment from many repositories of authentic historical information, long since destroyed; but still extant in his valuable books of the Jewish Antiquities and Wars; which extend nearly to the second century of our era. The ingredients of the intermediate history, so far from being deficient, are in far greater abundance, than is necessary to conduct the patient and skilful chronologer from one stage to another,

another, in computation, till he arrive at that brilliant period in pagan literature ;—the Augustan age.

AMONG the Greek authors, of superior note, the following, in the order of time, merit special regard: Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Diodorus Sic. Dionysius Hal. Plutarch, Arrian, Appian, Diogenes Laert. Philostratus, Dion Cassius. The principal Roman Writers whose works yet remaining conduce to adjust the chronology and history of their own nation to computations in use among other states, are either the general historians, as Livy ;—those who wrote of particular periods, as Sallust, Julius Cæsar ;—epitomists, as Eutropius, Florus, Paterculus ;—antiquaries, as Cato, Varro, Gellius ;—biographers, as C. Nepos, &c. Thus was it providentially ordained that no blank space should be left in the long period from the first to the second Adam. In short, from the seventh day of the primeval week, when the Almighty rested from the work of creation, to the first day of that week, when Jesus Christ rose from the grave, as the LIVING HEAD of a NEW WORLD, whether the computation proceed by the combination of natural days into weeks, lunations, equinoxes, and solstices ; by single astronomical years, or circulating periods of such years ; by the generations of men, or the duration of reigns, pontificates, and other magistracies ; not one day can be acquired or lost, during the lapse of 4040 years, six months *.

THE

* It must be admitted, that, in reckoning from the primary source of measured time, to the crucifixion, by the Julian year,

THE years from the day on which Christ rose from the grave, to that on which the Creator rested from his work, have, by notations expressed in the holy oracles, been circumscribed within the limits of 4040 years, six months. A perfect cube, thrown in any direction, on a plain surface, must ever light upon an equal side. If the computation now proceed in the progressive order, from the 7th of the primeval week, to the day on which our Lord rose to an endless life, the result in days, weeks, and years, will be the same; even though periods different in quantity be adopted.

Years from the first of Adam, in the year of the world	-	-	00
To the end of Noah's 601st year	-	-	1657
Commencement of Abraham's sojourning	-	428	2085
Departure of the 12 tribes from Egypt	-	430	2514½
Foundation of the first temple		480	2995
Its conflagration	-	426	3421
Date of Ezra's commission		130	3551
True historical year of Christ's nativity	-	453	4004
Year of the crucifixion	-	37	4040½

(a recent and unastronomical measure), an excrescence of 31 supernumerary days is collected. But retrench this nominal quantity of time, which has no root in planetary revolutions, no difference will remain, except that between time real and apparent, which is itself the subject of calculation.

C H A P. I.

Vulgar and Historical Dates of the Christian Era.

PRIOR to the resurrection of letters in Europe very little progress had been made in the art of computing times. The use of astronomical chronology to methodize history was no sooner perceived, than Scaliger, Petau, and other learned foreigners, applied their great talents to the elucidation, of a subject, till then involved in a maze of perplexity. Not altogether fruitless were their efforts; for partial light was educed from palpable darkness.

IN the past century the Most Reverend Dr. James Usher, primate of Armagh, finding the schemes of all his predecessors in chronological enquiries, equivocal, discordant, and contradictory, embarked in the same arduous enterprise, not without the sanguine hope of momentous discoveries. The result was a system of all others the nearest to truth, yet not altogether exempt from imperfections. His *Annals of the World*, though the capital production of a great master, and
hitherto

hitherto justly esteemed, as an invaluable treasure of ancient universal history, are constructed on an erroneous hypothesis.

DIONYSIUS the Little brought the vulgar era of the nativity too low by four years. For from the gospel history it is evident, that Jesus was born while Herod was living; and many infallible characters of time evince, that this prince died in the spring, a short time before the solemnization of a passover, and a few days after an eclipse of the moon, observed at Jericho, on the morning of the 13th March, A. P. Jul. 4710. If the 25th of the preceding December were, as commonly supposed, the true date of our Saviour's birth; if, by the order of Herod, the innocents were massacred on the 28th of the same month; and Jesus, in the intermediate space, were removed into Egypt, as he certainly was, prior to that massacre;—it must follow that the presentation of him in the temple was deferred till after his return from Egypt. But the law had prescribed the 40th day of every male infant's life for that solemnity; and the warning to return from Egypt was subsequent to Herod's demise, which did not happen before the 20th of March. Consequently our Lord's presentation in the temple and the massacre of the innocents were prior to the 28th December A. P. J. 4709. The date of his birth is, with the highest degrees of historical probability, referred to the feast of tabernacles in that year.

THUS, without incurring the censure of a rash determination, may the birth of Christ be connected
nearly

nearly with the time of the autumnal equinox A. M. 4004, coincident, as before, with the number of the Jul. Per. 4709.

By this arrangement is the metachronism of the Dionysian era rectified. The worthy Metropolitan, however, fixing on this true historical term of the nativity, pronounces it, (by a strange confusion of dates), the vulgar reckoning, and removes the genuine center of computation four years higher, so as to coincide with A. M. 4000.

IN Chronology, as in other arts, one error is the source of many more. To give his scheme the figure of coherence, he found it necessary to antedate the Christian era by four years, and to take as many from the then past age of the world. By this injudicious experiment the primate trusted, that, instead of the common and vulgar, he should obtain a true and natural epoch of the nativity of Christ*. Having transferred that event from 4008 to 4004, he had already obtained the true and natural term. Most preposterous it certainly was to anticipate the historical date of the Christian era by four years, and to retrench as many from the source of historical time. The general result of this fundamental oversight pervades the whole CHRONOLOGY of the ANNALS, and assigns to every historical event an erroneous date, with respect to one or other of the three chronological reckonings, by the years of the world, of the Julian period, or by

* See his Preface.

those before A. D. 1. But the more particular misarrangements are, 1. The fifth year of the world is accounted the first. 2. The historical year of the nativity is confounded with the vulgar or Dionysian. 3. To circumscribe the interval, from the creation to the Christian era, within the narrow limits of 40 centuries, four years are withdrawn from the reigns between Afa and Hezekiah. Let the four years taken from the age of the world be restored; the first will coincide with the number of the Jul. Per. 706, not 710 as in the Annals;—the 16th of Ahaz with A. M. 3282, not 3277;—the historical year of the nativity with 4004, not 4000;—and the Dionysian or Common, with 4008, not 4004.

THOUGH the usual computation by A. D. is at variance with astronomy, chronology, and history, “Yet,” (as Holder remarks), “since it is, and has universally been received over all Christendom, our compute by it is certain, and not liable to any error*.”

As a term of art, established by immemorial prescription, it may be retained in expressing dates. Those, who study precision in reckoning, have only to recollect, that the passing year 1795, is in truth the 1799th from our Lord’s birth exclusively. To this number, if the years of historical time, 4004, prior to our era, be added, ($1799 + 4004 = 5803$), the result will be the same with that of the common numbers added together. For example, $1795 + 4008 = 5803$.

* Discourse on Time, p. 31.

IN the Annals the long interval from the creation to the overthrow of Jerusalem is divided into seven ages. This division is retained, and the author's deviations from the truth of chronology, under each separately, reserved for the subsequent chapters.

IN exploring the source of measured time, and the dates of fixed periods, prior to the era of authentic history among the Gentiles, great expectations of important discoveries were entertained from Sir Isaac Newton's *Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms amended*; (a work, which every where indicates a superiority of genius, though genius fettered with prejudices in favour of pre-established systems); but the author's hopes, sanguine as they were, ended in the vexation of disappointment. That prodigy of genius, not suspecting fallibility in the decisions of a Metropolitan, whose chronological arrangements had obtained the sanction of general belief, implicitly adopted his fundamental principles, and, like his author, errs with much ingenuity. The great imperfection of Sir Isaac Newton's last, and not most scientific performance, is not extending his line of investigation beyond the days of Eli. Had he discovered the true source of historical time, the learned world would have been indebted to his sagacity for an improved edition of the *Sacred Chronology* from Adam to the Greek Olympiad.

C H A P. II.

*First Age of the World.**Chronology of the Pentateuch.—Events and Dates.*

A.M. J.P. B.C.		A.M. J.P. B.C.	
ANNALS	- 0 709	ARRANGEMENTS	0 705
Creation	- 1 710 4004*		1 706 4008
Deluge ends	1656 2365 2349		1657 2362 2351

A SCHEME of the primeval week, according to both computations, is thus exhibited:

ANNALS.	October.	ARRANGEMENTS.	October.
Days of the week	1 23 B.	Days of the week	1 22 m.
	2 24 m.		2 23 t.
☉ in ☾	3 25 t.		3 24 w.
	4 26 w.	☉ in ☽ ○	4 25 th.
	5 27 th.		5 26 f.
	6 28 f.		6 27 f.
God blessed and	7 29 f. sanctified the viith day		7 28 G.

By this scheme it is evident, that the very respectable author, conformably to the general opinion of the

* The Primate's confusion of terms is here exemplified: A. M. 1 is placed in coincidence with the 4004th before the Christian era. He means the vulgar computation; whereas A. M. 4004 is in truth the historical year of Christ's birth, and the 4th before, (but not including), the common term A. D. 1. which last is coincident with the number of the Julian Period 4714.

age in which he wrote, supposed, that Saturday was the viith day of the primeval, and of all the subsequent weeks, from the creation; and that the change from the seventh to the first day of the week, first took place from the day on which Christ rose from the dead. Misled by this problematical hypothesis, the very learned Metropolitán, chose for the source of his calculations the number of the Julian period 710, which was not the first, but the fifth from the origin of things. By the scheme of the Annals Saturday, the 29th October, was the day, which the Creator blessed and consecrated, in its periodical returns, for rest and devotion. But in the proposed Arrangements, which, agreeably to the sacred chronology, assign to the creation an earlier date by four years, Sunday, the 28th October, was the seventh of the primeval week, and its repetitions were observed by the patriarchs, from Adam to Moses, as the weekly Sabbath. At the Exodus the day of holy rest was transferred from the seventh of the patriarchal, to the first of the Mosaical, week; and at the resurrection of Christ the first of the Jewish and Christian week, was, and still continues, astronomically coincident, in the rotation of weeks, with the primeval Sabbath.

THE proofs which establish this conclusion cannot be specified, much less set forth at large, in this brief Analysis. Suffice it to observe, 1. That in the year before, (but not including), the first of the Christian era, 4008, the autumnal equinox fell within the limits of the 25th October. 2. That the two great luminaries were set in the firmament of heaven on the fourth day

of

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of the creation week. According to the ARRANGEMENTS, the moon was full, and the sun in Libra, on Thursday the 25th of October in that week. But in the ANNALS the 25th October was Tuesday, the third of the week *. 3. If the calculation be framed on the principle of Astronomical, (not Julian years), and consequently on the hypothesis of stationary equinoxes;—if likewise this calculation be continued progressively to A.D. 1792—the 28th October fell on a Sunday, the seventh of the patriarchal, but the first both of the Jewish, and the Christian week †. Thus is the uniform rotation of weeks ascertained during the lapse of 58 centuries, now past. Should it be the will of the Almighty to continue the planetary revolutions 58 centuries more, Sunday will again fall on the 28th October, in the year of the world 11,600. With the fundamental principle of the ANNALS, this uniform, and invariable, series of weeks is incompatible.

THE Mosaical chronology is constructed on the genealogy of the patriarchs; the age of each father at the birth of each specified son, respectively, being exactly defined, the sum of the intervals between the several descents, independently on the duration of particular lives, constitutes the measure of the distinct periods from the creation to the deluge; thence to the sojourning of Abraham; and thence to the Exodus.

IN the first and second of these periods each specified year of procreation is counted from and to the autumnal

* See the Scheme.

† Consult the Almanacks for that year.

equinox.. For example, “Adam lived 130 years and begat Seth.” The 130th of the father’s life is continued to the subsequent autumnal equinox, and from that cardinal point is computed the first year of the Son. This is the general rule. Otherwise the same year would be twice counted.

THIS first age of the world comprehends 1657 expanded years, ending with the six hundredth and first year of Noah’s life.

Stages of the Flood for astronomical Stile, according to the Hebrew and Roman Calendars.

IN the first series of columns are expressed the numbers, names, and days, of the patriarchal months. On the same line, in the second series, are marked the names and days of the Roman months; and the column on the margin to the right exhibits the alphabetical signatures for the days of the primitive week, the Sabbaths being characterised by capitals. The numbers in the column to the left, denote the days of the flood.

A. M. 1655.	IX M.	Tifri	co	Oct. 23 M.
		I		24 t.
1656.	visible.	☉ in ♈ I	1	25 w.
			2	26 th.
			3	27 f.
			4	28 f.
			5	29 A.
Yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain	} II	Marchef- van	} 10	Dec. 3 A.
After seven days, the wa- ters of the flood	} 17			10 A.
	C			40

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40	1657. The flood was 40	} III Casleu	26	Jan. 18	th.
	days upon the earth				
150	The waters prevailed 120	} VII Abib	16	May	8 t.
	days - - -				
151	The ark rested -		17		9 w.
225	Mountain top seen	X Tamuz	1	July	22 G.
265	After 40 days a raven	} XI Ab	11	Sept.	1 f.
	sent forth -				
272	After seven days a dove		19		8 f.
279	After seven days the dove	} XII Elul	3		22 f.
	a second time -				
286	After seven days the dove				
	a third time -				
319	The ark uncovered ○ in ≈	I Tifri	1	Oct.	25 th.
375	Go forth of the ark, thou	} II Marchesv.	27	Dec.	20 th.
	and thy wife, &c.				

THAT inestimable monument of astronomical antiquity, Noah's journal, specifies several chronological characters, which define the number and quantity of the patriarchal months, and explain the mechanism of the Hebrew year, in its primitive form. Hence the author of these papers constructed a table in expanded days. In the preceding scheme, those only which are historically mentioned, subsequent to the first week, it was judged proper to insert.

C H A P. III.

Second Age of the World.

HERE a new term of computation begins with unity. "Arphaxad was born two years after the Flood." The author of the Annals, reckoning the first year of the new world to have begun with the first day of the first month, when Noah removed the covering of the ark, connects the birth of Arphaxad with A. M. 1658. But as Noah evacuated the ark in the 601st year of his life, which ran parallel with 1657, this year is evidently characterised by the sacred historian as the last of the old world; and hence, exclusively, must the new computation proceed. Arphaxad was therefore born during the currency of 1659, and from the subsequent year is his age of 438 years counted. This anticipation abridges the chronology of this and the succeeding periods. But other dates, in this section of the ANNALS, are much more exceptionable.

Time of the Dispersion.

THE date of Peleg's birth, in whose days the earth was divided, coincides with the first year of the second century after the deluge. At the time of his birth, Josephus says, the dispersion of the nations to their several countries did happen*. But as the world was not then sufficiently populous, this interpretation of the sacred historian's words, "*In his days,*" is unnatural. The phrase is strictly proper if

* Ant. I. 6. 4.

understood to intimate, that the dispersion took place in his life-time.

USHER, Bedford, and Bryant, conjecture that Noah divided the lands among his sons, about the time of Peleg's birth, and before the general dispersion. But pure conjecture, without the colour of historical evidence, is not to be admitted.

THE arduous attempt at Babel, the extent of that structure, as described by the ancients, and the still perceptible vestiges of its ruins, indicate a stage of population, and of progress in arts, incongruous with the hypothesis, that the enterprise was defeated so early as the lapse of the first century from the flood. Every circumstance in the state of the world, taken in connection with the concise reports of sacred history, admits, nay requires, the confusion of tongues, with the consequent separation from Babel, to be brought so low as 100 years before the birth of Abraham. Suppose the 277th year after the flood to be the true date, Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, Peleg, were then all living, and most probably Japheth, Ham, and Nimrod. During the interval thence to the sojourning of Abraham, a period of 150 years, several political establishments might have been erected, and magnificent cities built, so as to accord with the advanced state of population in that age. Admit this arrangement, no necessity occurs for having recourse to the exaggerated chronology of the Greek Pentateuch.

ON the other hand, if the Archbishop's date of the dispersion be judged preferable, the romantic project at Babel was defeated almost as soon as begun ; and no

stronger objection to the accuracy of Moses as a chronologer, and to his veracity as a historian, is supposable. But why should his reputation suffer from the unskilful positions of his commentators?

A BRIEF abstract of corrected dates, in this period, is subjoined, with their chronological characters.

ANNALS.	Yrs of the W.	J. P.	B. C.	ARRANGEMENTS.	W.	J. P.	B. C.
Termination of the flood -	{	1656	2365	2349	-	1657	2362 2351
Arphaxad born		1658	2368	2346	-	1659	2364 2349
Peleg born -	{	1757	2467	2267	-	{	1758 2463 2250
The dispersion						{	1934 2639 2074
Abraham born		2008	2718	1996	-	2009	2714 1999
Terah dies -		2083	2793	1921	-	2084	2789 1924

SIR W. Raleigh observes, with much judgement and equal spirit, “ If we advisedly consider the state and countenance of the world, such as it was in Abraham’s time, yea, before his birth, we shall find, that it were very ill done, by following opinion without the guide of reason, to pare the times over deeply between the flood and Abraham, because, in cutting them too near the quick, the reputation of the whole story might perchance bleed *.” This pertinent remark is the result of his determination concerning the two questions, whether the time of Peleg’s birth were the true date of the dispersion, and the 70th of Terah the year of Abraham’s birth? The resolution of these enquiries affirmatively, is the true reason why the Septuagint chronology hath been so generally preferred to the Hebrew, which, if fairly interpreted, removes every objection to the numbers of mankind, at both periods.

* Hist. p. 277.

C H A P. IV.

*Third Age of the World.*1. *Date of the Sojourning.*

THE Annals represent the removal of Abraham, first from Ur, then from Syria, and his entrance into Canaan, as the events of his 75th year. But the history requires a longer interval. In the intermediate stage he built a village, or town, afterward denominated a city, for the accommodation of his little colony. This certainly was not the work of a few months. It seems he called it Haran, after the name of his brother, who had died in the land of his nativity. This circumstance implies the prospect of a permanent residence. By a divine signal, or monition, there he pitched his tent, and from the history it does not appear, that he entertained the thought of a subsequent removal. The primate, however, assumes the postulate, that the patriarch left Chaldea with the explicit foreknowledge of an inheritance in Palestine;—that his progress was interrupted by the indisposition, and death of his father at Haran;—and that he set out thence for Canaan, the place of his final destination, whither he arrived, before the expiration of one full year from the time he left his country, his kindred, and his father's house.

EVERY

EVERY clause of this complex postulate is controvertible. At the command of God, the patriarch departed from Ur, into a land *afterwards* to be shewn to him. From these premises an Apostle infers a conclusion, at variance with the archbishop's position: "By FAITH," not by PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE, "Abraham, when he was called to go out unto a place, which he should *after* receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and went out, *not knowing* whither he went."

ABRAHAM and Lot had gathered substance, and gotten souls, in Haran. Their chief substance was cattle, which had increased by procreation. Their domestics too had multiplied by birth, and by purchase; or, as the Chaldee paraphrast conjectures, by proselytism. All these circumstances justify the supposition, that Abraham considered Syria as the place of his ultimate destination, and that his abode there was protracted beyond the space of a few months.

MUCH more probable is the opinion of Petau and Shuckford, who suppose, that Abraham, with his attendants, was warned to retreat from Ur in his 70th year; that he resided in Haran five years, and entered Canaan at the Age of 76. Of this last date we have the utmost certainty. For after Abraham had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and when he was fourscore and six years old, Hagar bare Ishmael. This notation serves for a proof, that the sojourning in Canaan and Egypt was adopted as a new term of computation. It is carefully to be noted, that the anticipation of one year in this place, and of another at the

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time of Arphaxad's birth, unavoidably antedates the Exodus, the foundation of the temple, and all the intermediate events, by two years.

2. *Age of Ishmael when cast out.*

USHER, adopting implicitly the opinion of St. Jerome, that Ishmael was 18 years old when ejected, with his mother, from Abraham's family, perplexes the chronology and history of the sojourning in Canaan and Egypt. His age, at the birth of Isaac, was 14 years *.

3. *Age of Isaac at the Death of Sarah.*

THE Primate, misled by the Authority of Josephus †, again deviates from the Mosaical chronology, by referring the transactions on Moriah ‡ to the 25th of Isaac's age. He was born in the 90th of his Mother's life. She died at the age of 127. Both historians (Moses and Josephus) connect the return of Abraham and Isaac from the altar, with the time of Sarah's death. Josephus, in particular, emphatically remarks, " Sarah died after a short interval ;" whence it is reasonably inferred, that Isaac's age was then 37. By a decisive notation of time, in both the historians, this arrangement is authenticated ; " Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebecca to wife." Moses adds another circumstance, still more determinate ; " Isaac brought her [Rebecca] into his mother Sarah's tent,

* Compare Gen. xvi. 16. with ch. xvii 24. and with ch. xxi. 5.

† Ant. I. 13. 1.

‡ Gen. xxii.

and

and was comforted after his mother's death." By retaining a pious remembrance of an endeared parent, not without a mixture of grief, during the space of three years, Isaac exhibited an amiable specimen of filial regard. But the supposition, that such grief was prolonged 15 full years, violates probability.

"ON the day that Isaac was weaned Abraham made a great feast; and Sarah saw the son of Hagar mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, cast out this bond-woman and her son.—Abraham sent her and the child away." By what rule of interpretation is that weaning feast deferred to the fourth of Isaac's life, and the expulsion of Ishmael to his 18th year? From no character of time, expressed in the history, does it seem probable, that these incidents were subsequent to the first year of Isaac's age. Josephus very properly observes this connection. "When Sarah had born Isaac, she was unwilling that Ishmael should be brought up with him, and persuaded Abraham to send him and his mother to a distant country *."

BUT to reconcile the whole period of sojourning, 430, with the 400, (that part of it mentioned Gen. xv. 13.) Bedford, Kennedy, and others, date the commencement of the less number from the fifth of Isaac, with which they connect the weaning feast, (exactly 400 years before the Exodus). For want of historical evidence, this postulate, as at variance with probability, has been rejected. From the same term, the fifth of Isaac, are computed the 400 years of

* Ant. I. 12. 3.

affliction*, and the mocking of Isaac by Ishmael is specified, by Usher, Bedford, Kennedy, &c. as the first act of persecution. This gloss is, in all its parts, equivocal, and inapposite. For, the text to which they refer implies, that Abraham's seed should sojourn in a land, not their own, 400 years. It is not affirmed that they should, all that time, be in bondage and affliction. Isaac, the father of that seed, could not be a stranger, in a land not his own, before his birth, in the 25th year from the entrance of Abraham into Canaan. Hence to the egress the interval is 405. In the prophecy the round number is expressed, and the odd years omitted. It was not necessary that the sum should have been defined with more precision. This solution by St. Austin the Primate mentions without approbation. But it is much less exceptionable than the hypothesis, that Sarah, from the age of ninety, suckled Isaac five years.

4. Genealogies from Jacob.

IN this, as in the subsequent ages, the Annals exemplify many instances of their author's negligence, want of skill, and fallacious conclusions, in the article of genealogy. Those beyond the limits of this period are reserved for their proper dates.

FROM the birth of Jacob, progressively, the order of succession is not specified by the years of the fathers at the birth of their sons; and henceforth the greatest perplexities, in adjusting history to the course of nature,

* Gen. xv. 13.

occur. The Archbishop rightly computes this patriarch's marriage with Laban's two daughters from his 77th year; and, from the same term, his 14 years of stipulated service. The pedigree is continued in the line of Judah, his fourth son by Leah, who could not be born before the 81st year of his father. The father's age, when he stood before Pharaoh, was 130; and $130 - 81 = 49$. This remainder is the age of Judah in the second year of the famine. The time of his marriage with Shuah of Canaan, though involved in artful uncertainty by the subtilty of chronologers, is determined by infallible notations in the sacred history, without the aid of imaginary transpositions.

THE 130th year of Jacob was the 39th of Joseph. Joseph's age, when sold into Egypt, was 17, and Judah's 27. "At that time Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite." *There and then* he took Shuah to be his wife, by whom, at distinct births, he had two sons. Both in succession, and each, at the age of puberty, married the same woman; but both being suddenly cut off by the hand of heaven, died childless. Suppose the elder brother to have married at the age of 16, and to have died before the expiration of one year, the computation is brought down to the 43d of Judah's life. After the decease of the younger, the widow must have tarried a competent time, before she could reasonably suspect Judah's intention to retract his promise of his only remaining son for her third husband. Suspicion, at last, growing up into despair, she tried the arts of guile, and fatally succeeded.

succeeded. "Judah begat Pharez and Zara of Thamar." Incongruous it is to imagine, that these twins were born before the 48th year of Judah. Yet, in the next year after, Pharez, with his two sons Hezron and Hamul, accompanied Jacob into Egypt. Here is a physical impossibility! Easy it is to establish the veracity of the sacred historian. But it is first requisite to exhibit the feeble, elusive, and contradictory, arguments urged by the Metropolitan, for adjusting this section of the history to the course of nature.

IN his *Treatise of Sacred Chronology* *, he assumes the postulate, that Judah at the age of 16, in the year of Jacob's return from Syria, married Shuah. This fundamental position, as repugnant to the testimony of scripture, which connects the time of this marriage with the year when Joseph was sold into Egypt, is inadmissible. He proceeds, "In the three successive years, Judah became the father of as many sons, at the age of 19," (as by him computed). "Er, the first born, having entered his 15th year, married Thamar; and Onan, the second, at the same age, espoused his brother's widow the year after. At the expiration of two years more, and 15 before the descent into Egypt, were born the twin brothers, Pharez and Zara. Thus about the beginning of that year which brought Jacob with his family into Egypt, might Hezron be born, and before its termination, Hamul; or, if they likewise were twins, the nativity of both may be referred to the end of that year." The Most Reverend Primate expresses his

* Part I. c. 10.

persuasion, that no one Article of this Arrangement, will be found at variance with reason and nature. On the contrary, the writer of these sheets declares, with great deference, his firm belief that Pharez, the father of Hezron and Hamul, was himself an infant, at the time of the migration from Canaan into Egypt.

How then is the veracity of Moses to be vindicated? It is replied, that the register in the xlvth of Genesis has not, in its genuine purity, been transmitted. In a very remote age, but long after the days of Moses, and still more recent than the date of the Greek Pentateuch, in the Time of Pr. Philadelphus, certain critics, with more good meaning than skill, incapable of accounting for the original form of that register, but finding the recorded names unequal to the whole sum, had recourse to the rash expedient of supplying the deficiency from the later Hebrew pedigrees in the Books of The Numbers and Chronicles: Nay, even from the interpolated names in the Greek version.

THE unavoidable brevity of this Analysis forbids a minute enquiry into this subject. Three very probable considerations are obvious and indubitable. 1. Moses excluded from his Autograph the names of all the females, except, for distinction, those of a few mothers. 2. He inserted only the names of such males as were born, and living at the time of this migration. 3. He divided the register into three classes, and defined the number in each, that the deficiency of the males might be filled up with an adequate number of females.

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By the first rule, Dinah and Serah were omitted, because females, except mothers occasionally, had no place or rank in the sacred genealogies.

By the second, males not then born were excluded. Of this denomination were two of Reuben's four sons; for he had but two in the year of the descent, and these he offered to his father, as hostages for Benjamin *. Nor were the sons of Levi then born; for Gershom, the eldest of three, signifies, *a stranger there*, which name, if he were born in Canaan, had no significance; but if soon after the arrival in Egypt, its special emphasis needs no commentary. Er and Onan were omitted, for they died in Canaan, before the removal thence.

THESE are but a specimen of the many names, transferred from registers of a subsequent date.

As the birth of the patriarchs after Jacob is not characterized by the current years of their fathers' lives, the interval from the death of Joseph to Moses, who was 80 years old at the Exodus, cannot, by the usual method, be ascertained. An expedient, however, occurs. The whole period of sojourning is 430. Joseph, at the age of 110, died in the 285th from the arrival of Abraham in Canaan. Add the age of Moses at the egress $285 + 80 = 365$ and $430 - 365 = 65$, the interval required. Such is the use of fixed periods in chronology.

* Gen. xlii. 37.

Corrected Dates, with the Chronological Numbers
from the 70th of Abraham.

ANNALS.	W.	J. P.	Ref. A. D.	ARRANGEMENTS.	W.	J. P.	Ref. A. D.
Abram, &c. leave Ur -	} 2083	2793	1921	-	2079	2784	1929
Depart from Haran, and set- tle in Canaan				{ Remove from Haran - First year of so- journing -	{ 2084	2789	1924
Ishmael born	2094	2804	1910				
Isaac born -	2108	2818	1896	-	2095	2800	1913
Returns from the altar -	} 2133	2843	1871	-	2109	2814	1899
Marries Rebecca				-	2146	2851	1862
Jacob born -	2148	2858	1856	-	2149	2854	1859
Marries Leah and Rachel	} 2168	2878	1836	-	2169	2874	1839
Judah born				-	2246	2951	1762
Joseph born	2245	2955	1759	-	2250	2955	1758
Judah marries	2249	2959	1755	-	2260	2965	1748
Joseph sold	2259	2969	1745	-	-	-	-
Jacob in Egypt	2265	2275	1739	Judah marries	2277	2982	1731
Jacob dies -	2276	2986	1728	Pharez born -	2299	3004	1709
Joseph dies -	2298	3008	1706	-	2316	3021	1692
Moses born -	2315	3025	1689	-	2370	3075	1630
The Exodus -	2369	3079	1635	-	2435	3140	1573
	2433	3140	1571	-	2515	3220	1493
	2513	3223	1491	-			

THIS scheme exhibits but a few of the mistakes in the Annals for this period; some are the result of the author's assumed term for the source of computation; others of deviation from historical order; and all the dates of events from the creation to the release out of Egypt, characterised by fallacious numbers. Bedford retains the Primate's computation for the year of the Exodus, with respect to the then age of the world. Kennedy, still more at variance with precision, connects it with A. M. 2512. All the three computations abridge the interval from the flood to the end of the sojourning.

WITH

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WITH this latter term began a new reckoning by weeks, months, and years ; the seventh day of the week, and the seventh month of the year, as counted from the creation, (that is, from the last day of the primeval week), having become respectively the first of the new series.

FROM Sunday the 28th October, when the Almighty rested from all his works, to Saturday the 27th April, when the first passover was solemnized in Egypt, the intermediate space, as defined by the sacred historian, is precisely 2514 solar tropical years, and 26 weeks, wanting one day ; for the week of the Exodus consisted of but six natural days. On the morning of the seventh day, after midnight, all the hosts of the Lord went out from Egypt. That day, the weekly Sabbath from the creation, being signalized by the departure of the twelve tribes, was thenceforth, on all its subsequent returns, accounted the first of the Mosaical week ; and Saturday, the sixth by the patriarchal computation, observed as the Sabbath of the Israelites.

IN the year of the Exodus Abib, or Nisan, began on Sunday, coincident with the 14th April, whence all the sacred years of the Hebrews were computed, according to the course of the moon. From the first paschal new moon to Pentecost, the historical transactions, with their dates in the Hebrew and Roman calendar, for N. S., are thus exhibited, in correspondent lines and columns.

A. M.

A. M.				B. M.			
2515 D	XI M.	April	13 f. 6	II Jiar	2	15 w. 4	
I Abib	1		14 F. 7		3 May	16 th. 5	
	2		15 m. 1		4	17 f. 6	
	3		16 t. 2	3d Mos.	5 Sabbath	18 f. 7	
	4		17 w. 3		6	19 F. 1	
	5		18 th. 4		7	20 m. 2	
	6		19 f. 5		8	21 t. 3	
	7		20 f. 6		9	22 w. 4	
	8		21 F. 7		10	23 th. 5	
	9		22 m. 1		11	24 f. 6	
Paſ. Lamb	10 Confined		23 t. 2	4th Mos.	12 Sabbath	25 f. 7	
⊙ in γ	11		24 w. 3		13	26 F. 1	
	12		25 th. 4		14	27 m. 2	
	13		26 f. 5		15	28 t. 3	
Paſſover	14 O. XI. A.		27 f. 6		16	29 w. 4	
Depart. }	15 Egypt -		28 F. 1		17	30 th. 5	
from }					18	31 f. 6	
	16		29 m. 2	Quails	19 June	1 f. 7	
	17		30 t. 3	Manna fix	20	2 F.	
	18 May		1 w. 4	days in	21	3 m.	
	19		2 th. 5	continual	22	4 t.	
Paſſage }	20 the Red }		3 f. 6	ſucceſſion	23	5 w.	
over }	Sea }				24	6 th.	
1ſt Mo- }	21 Sabbath		4 f. 7		25	7 f.	
ſaical }				No Manna	26	8 f.	
	22		5 F. 1		27	9 F.	
	23		6 m. 2		28	10 m.	
	24		7 t. 3		29	11 t.	
	25		8 w. 4		30	12 w.	
	26		9 th. 5	III Sivan	1	13 th.	
	27		10 f. 6		2	14 f.	
2d Mos.	28 Sabbath		11 f. 7	No Manna	3	15 f.	
	29		12 F. 1	Pentecoſt	4 The Law	16 F.	
	30		13 m. 2	promulgated.			
II Jiar	1		14 t. 3				

OBVIOUS is the construction and the uses of this table. It is to be noted, that the paschal full moon was signalized by an eclipse, when the angel of death swept forth to smite the first born of man and beast.

THAT Saturday was first appointed to be kept holy, as the national sabbath, by the Israelites, in all their generations, and in all their dwellings, at the time of their first passover, is certain, from the regulations concerning the number and division of the weeks from the

D

returns

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returns of that festival to Pentecost yearly. “Ye shall count from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete; even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days*.” The passover was invariably to be solemnized on the 14th day from the visibility of the paschal moon, without regard to the day of the week on which that full moon should fall, by whatever name, or ordinal number, it might be distinguished. For instance, if the moon should be full before Monday evening, the passover was to be kept that day at the prescribed hour, (between the two evenings). The 50 days were to be counted from Saturday in that week, being the national sabbath. The morrow after that sabbath was Sunday, the first of the 50 days. During the continuance of that solemnity that day was to be signalized by a special service,—the oblation of the first fruits;—and by an appropriate number;—the first day of unleavened bread, of which the use was strictly prescribed to the end of that week, SEVEN DAYS. The morrow, therefore, after the national sabbath, immediately subsequent to the passover, is virtually, if not in direct terms, characterized, as the first day of the Mosaical week. It was likewise the first of every week to Pentecost, the last of the 50 days, and the first of the eighth week from the offering of the first fruits. This order and service were observed to the day when our Lord rose from the dead, as the first fruits of them that slept, and so, in

* Levit. xxiii. 15, 16.

the very circumstance of the time, he realized that typical service. At the Exodus the primitive sabbath was not desecrated, but changed; and, at last, resumed its primeval use, with accumulated honours, being a memorial of the CREATION, and of a still greater work, REDEMPTION.

IN the preceding table, the change of the sabbath on the day of the paschal full moon is exemplified in rotation through seven of its returns, and the reality of that change established on the firm basis of historical truth, and astronomical calculation. The first national sabbath was sanctified, as a season both of rest and devotion. Then it was that the whole assembly proclaimed the praises of their Almighty Deliverer in the triumphant hymn, *Exod. xv.* Its 5th repetition was signalized by a supply of quails, for provision, and the next two by the periodical cessation of manna. That particular day was in like manner distinguished during the space of 40 years; for manna was not totally withheld till the Sunday after the first passover in Canaan; the very day on which it was first vouchsafed.

C H A P. V.

Fourth Age of the World.

DURING the 40 years, from the Exodus to the passage over Jordan, the Arrangements in the ANNALS are generally correct, such as result from the erroneous combination of the original numbers being excepted.

Natural Term of Life after the Exodus.

THE Author sets out with this position, that from the second year of this period, the natural term of human life was reduced to its present usual standard, 70 or 80 years.

THIS postulate merits a strict scrutiny, and, as it perplexes the sacred genealogies, down to the time of David, seems to require correction. From the Exodus to the birth of this prince is an interval of 406 years, for five generations, of which the mean quantity is 81.

It must be admitted that the common interval of descents, as defined in the times subsequent to the deluge, was not uniform. From Arphaxad to Terah, exclusively, the mean age of procreation was 31 years eight

eight months nearly. In the generation before the extraction of the Messiah from Abraham was made known, propagation had a slower progress; for from Terah to Judah the mean standard was 93; and thence to David $65\frac{1}{2}$.

PROVIDENCE, it may reasonably be presumed, had important ends for appointing, comparatively, few human progenitors to the promised seed, in whom blessings, for all nations, were reserved. One natural reason is obvious. In the line of Terah by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Judah, the pedigree is counted from the younger sons, in numerous instances. Nor is it improbable that the fathers of the particular tribe, whence the Messiah was intended to spring, should have their faith and patience long tried, by waiting for the accomplishment of the promise, as far as they, in particular, were concerned. Isaac was born of a superannuated mother. Several examples nearly similar, repeated in the series of generations, might, when the mystery was fully to be revealed, produce a more easy and cordial belief of immense blessings from the son of a virgin. It need not be supposed, that the mean age of procreation, exemplified in the seven descents from Arphaxad to Terah, was, in the subsequent ages, considerably enlarged or anticipated. Had it been enlarged, the case of Abraham's family would not have been singular. The subject now under consideration is the common term of natural life; and it is to be noted, that,

1. THE sentence of being cut off in the wilderness, at the end of 40 years, was limited to the generation

brought out of Egypt, and of them, to such alone as were 20 years old, or upward, at the time of that release, and had likewise murmured at the report of the cowardly and lying spies. To the generation which should be born in the wilderness, or in later times, the threatening did not extend.

2. MANY instances of great longevity occur, in the interval from the egress to David. Aaron, Moses, Eleazar, Caleb, Joshua, belong to the former period. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, was certainly born in the wilderness. The year before the passage over Jordan he signalized his zeal and heroism in the plains of Moab *. He was then 20 years old at least. From the chronology and history of the times, it is probable, that 50 years after the entrance into Canaan, he succeeded his father in the pontificate, which function he discharged 45 years. He therefore lived 116 years, if not more.

OTHNIEL, the son of Caleb's brother, was a military general in the sixth year of Joshua's government, and acquired renown in the reduction of Debir †. After 60 years he undertook the conduct of the war against Cushan, which lasted eight years. The land had rest 40 years, and Othniel died. His age must therefore have exceeded 128.

GIDEON, that mighty man of valour, maintained a war of seven years against Midian, and after a glorious victory, which restored quietness to the country 40

* Num. xxv. 7. † Josh. xv. 17.

years, died in a good old age. The phraseology of that time justifies the conclusion, that he lived one full century.

IN the continually decreasing period of longevity, Eli, about 66 years after, died by accident, at the age of 98, an old man; yet nothing is said of his having exceeded the ordinary term of life. Samuel succeeded him in the pontificate. Thirty years was the age of consecration, and he had ministered in the vocation of a subordinate priest, before he rose to the primacy, when his age was probably 36. His administration, at the inauguration of Saul, was a period of 36 years more. Josephus reports that Saul survived him only two years *. Every circumstance in the history confirms this notation; and more particularly Saul's consultation with the woman at Endor. If Samuel's death had not been a recent occurrence, it is not supposable, that the king would have desired an interview with that prophet. All these characters of time evince that Samuel lived 110 years.

UNCERTAIN is the date of Jesse's birth. He went for an old man in the days of Saul, when his son, David, was but a stripling. In the 36th of that reign, David committed his father and mother to the protection of the king of Moab; and they most probably were living at the death of Saul. Hence it may be presumed, that Jesse's age filled up one complete century; and that human life was first reduced to the term of 70

* Ant. VI. 14. 8.

or 80 years in the time of David. In the 33d of this reign, and at the age of 80, Barzillai pronounced himself a very old man.

3. RELYING on the certain truth of his postulate, Usher deducts 31 years from the government of Joshua, which, with other mis-arrangements, to be specified in their proper places, abbreviates the chronology from Moses to Othniel.

4. In the *Treatise on the Sacred Chronology* *, the age of procreation assigned to the three ancestors of David, after Salmon, contradicts the term of natural life, said, in the *ANNALS*, to have been fixed in the year after the Exodus, to 70, or 80. There it is assumed, that Boaz lived 102, Obed and Jesse each 111, before the birth of their respective sons. The interval from the birth of Boaz to that of David is 324. This sum divided by 3, quotes 108, for the common measure. But is it credible, in a period of the world when very few mortals lived more than 80 years, that the space between three descents, in immediate succession, did exceed a century? To no purpose is it alleged, that a great many examples of persons, who lived from 130 to 150 years, from the days of Vespasian to Thomas Parr, are recorded in history. These examples the Primate has been at great pains to collect. His conclusion is a paralogism. The point to be proved was, that three fathers, in lineal and continuous order, in any period since the time of David, begat sons at

* Part I. c. 12.

the age of 102, or 111; that is 20 or 30 years after the usual and ultimate term of life. Serious reasoning in support of a paradox is ridiculous.

MUCH easier it is to demolish a tottering, than erect a firm and well proportioned fabric. The scheme of scripture chronology will derive both firmness and proportion from genealogy. In this directory, for computation, two rules are carefully to be observed. The age of procreation must neither anticipate the course of nature, nor be extended to the utmost term of life. The birth of a son prior to the 14th of a father's life may, as not vouched by experience or history, be considered as a physical improbability; and in the sacred genealogies no example of procreation before 16 occurs, and none ought to be admitted.

FROM Abraham to David the generations are 14, counting Solomon the first of a new series.

WHEN the long lives of the first three patriarchs are considered, (175, 180, and 147), the birth of Isaac in the 100th of Abraham, of Jacob in the 60th of Isaac, and of Judah in the 81st of Jacob, are events in perfect agreement with the course of nature. From the descent into Egypt, with which the birth of Pharez has been connected, to the egress, the years are 215, and the generations four, excluding Nahshon, whose age at the egress is supposed to have been 19. This number taken from 215 leaves 196 for the four intermediate generations, of which the mean quantity for each is precisely 49. The ages of Levi, Joseph, Kohath, and Amram, were severally 137, 110, 133, and 137, and the

the common measure 129. These four were contemporary with Pharez, Hezron, Aram, and Amminadab. It involves no absurdity to affirm, that 49 was the mean interval of descents, at a time, when the mean term of life was 129.

FROM the birth of Nahshon, as above stated, to that of Solomon, are 475 years, and six generations, the common measure being 79. It has been shewn, that the mean term of life in this interval was 108, which exceeds the mean age of procreation by 29. In none of these computations is any thing affirmed, at variance with the course of nature.

THE foregoing arrangements proceed on the supposition, that David was the last in the first series of 14 generations. But the Evangelists words may be considered as placing David at the top of the second series, without enlarging the number of generations in that, or the subsequent division.

THIS conjecture rests on the authority of an inspired writer: "Pharez begat Hezron, Hezron begat Ram*, Ram begat Amminadab, Amminadab begat Nahshon, Nahshon begat *Salmah*, and Salmon begat Boaz; Boaz begat Obed, Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David†. Salmon is here characterised as the son of *Salmah*, and grandson of Nahshon. This addition makes Jesse the 14th from Abraham, and the 10th from Pharez. Jackson, in his Chronological Antiquities, first suggested that this variation of two similar

* Aram, Mat. i. 3.

† Ruth iv. 18—22.

names denotes two different persons. In his second dissertation *On the State of the Printed Hebrew Text* *, Kennicott approves the conjecture, as ingenious, probable, and satisfactory. This emendation, if it be one, is mentioned not as absolutely necessary to ascertain the genuine chronology of the Bible, and its conformity with the course of nature; but merely as an expedient for weakening an objection, otherwise not forcible †.

* P. 184. and 543.

† The reasons which justify the fixing of Nahshon's birth to the 19th year before the Exodus, evince that he died after Joshua. Certain it is, that some elders, at least, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, (both in Egypt and at the Jordan), did actually survive Joshua; Eleazar, for instance; and if Nahshon did not, it will be impossible to find the plurality implied in ALL. The same reasons which demonstrate the improbability, that the Rachab, Mat. i. 5. was the same Rahab who entertained the spies, Josh. ii. are set forth at large in the *Dissertation on the Hebrew Genealogies*. If the name in both passages describe the same person, she must have been 180 years old at the birth of Boaz.

Sir Isaac Newton, finding a Jeshua who had sons in the retinue of Zorobabel from Chaldea, confounds that Levite with the high priest of that name. In the same register he finds an Ezra, and a Nehemiah, whom he affirms to have been living 100 years after.

Chronology from the Death of Moses to Saul.

C H A P. I. J O S H U A.

Septenary Years of Rest.

TH E unsuccessful attempts of Usher, Bedford, Whiston, &c. to fix the true era of sabbatical years and jubiles, induced Prideaux to pronounce those circulating periods both uncertain and useless. Their use in computation is obvious, and the term of computation defined, in the original institution, "When ye come into the land, &c. then shall the land keep a sabbath. Six years shalt thou sow thy seed; and six years shalt thou prune thy vineyard, and gather in thy fruit; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land; a sabbath for the Lord: Thou shalt neither sow thy field; nor prune thy vineyard *." Before the inhabitants were subdued and the land divided, Israel could neither sow nor reap. Usher allows six years for the conquest of the country, and appropriates the seventh for its partition. But a sabbatical year could not be observed before six had been employed in sowing and reaping.

* Lev. xxv. 2—5.

The subjugation of the natives was the work of five years. In the beginning of the sixth, Joshua and Eleazar, with the fathers of the tribes, proceeded to divide the lands by line and lot. Caleb, prior to that distribution, claimed, in virtue of a grant from Moses, Hebron for his inheritance. In the second year from the Exodus Caleb's age was 40, and 85 in the 46th*. Thus is the date of the partition ascertained. At the time of the autumnal equinox in that year the tribes, having acquired their several possessions, began to plow, plant, and sow. The first possible year of rest began at the same cardinal point in the 53d from the egress, and the 13th from the passage over Jordan, A. M. 2568.

“THOU shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be forty-nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month†.” Here is the quantity of a jubile defined; the 50th year from the foregoing jubile inclusively; or in a continual series from the primary rest for the land. Thus is the term of computation certain. These circulating periods serve as a regulating measure in the progress of computation indefinitely; and with respect to the sacred chronology, answer the same end with the Julian period, applied to the chronology of the world. For example,

THE sacred critics and expositors agree that a jubile characterised some one year of our Lord's natural Life;

* Josh. xiv. 7—11.

† Lev. xxv. 8, 9.

that of his nativity, baptism, or crucifixion. Discordant, however, are their opinions. But this test is decisive.

FROM A. M. 2568, on the tenth day of the seventh Hebrew month, according to the patriarchal calendar, continue the reckoning down 1470 years, equal to 210 septenary combinations of years, or 30 jubiles; the operation terminates with the ninth of the seventh Hebrew month, A. M. 4038. That was the fourth of John's ministry, the 34th of our Lord's age, and the very date of his baptism. From Jordan he went straightway into the wilderness, at the end of 40 days returned into Galilee, entered the synagogue at Nazareth, on the sabbath day, and read from the book of Isaiah, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Thus calculation agrees with the infallible testimony, both of prophecy and history, in the conclusion, that our Lord began his ministry on the 30th jubile from the first sabbatical year in Canaan.

HENCE it is evident, that the Primate's arrangement misplaces the root of computation by jubiles, confounds the first year of John's ministry with that of Christ's baptism, and contrary to every notation in the gospel history, defers his entrance on the prophetic function, three years beyond its true date.

Length of Joshua's Government.

By the computation of Josephus the administration of Joshua is compressed within the narrow limits of 25

years ; Lightfoot admits but 17 ; Usher no more than nine. He died at the age of 110. If the ANNALS give the proper notation, he was 61 years old in the year of the egress. In that year he is denominated a young man *.

AT the age of 30 the expression *young* is usual ; but *youth* is at variance with threescore. Suppose Joshua in his 30th year discomfited Amalek. Add 80, the sum is 110. By this reckoning he judged Israel 40 years. In the year of the partition he was old and stricken in years, his age being 76. “ Very much land then remained to be possessed” †. The truth is, that no part of it had been divided by lot. To Caleb, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, their possessions, had been assigned by Moses. “ It came to pass *a long time after* the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all his enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old,” &c. ‡. If Joshua died three years after the partition, the phrase, *a long time after*, is egregiously misapplied, but extremely proper, if he died after the lapse of 34 years. With these characters of time every circumstance in the history accords. But the Primate, finding it impracticable to comprise the years of oppression and rest, within a reasonable compass, so as not to exceed the period of 480 years, found it necessary to abbreviate the duration both of Joshua’s and Samuel’s government.

* Exod. xxxiii. 11. † Josh. xiii. 1. ‡ Ch. xxiii. 1.

C H A P. II.

The Book of the Judges.

THIS history opens with a recapitulation of certain incidents more fully recorded in the Book of Joshua, and fills up the interval from his death to the commencement of Othniel's administration, where the proper subject of this history begins. This interval includes 20 years ; for the oppression under Cushan began in the last year of the first century from the Exodus ; and these 20 years are divided into two equal portions. " During all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, Israel served the Lord. But after them arose another generation, who knew not the Lord," &c. The enormities practised during these ten years are concisely related from the 17th chapter to the end of the Book. The time is intimated by two chronological marks, the pontificate of Phinehas the son of Eleazar, and by the want of a king, or supreme civil magistrate in Israel. The period thus characterised could be no other than the intermediate space of 20 years from the death of Joshua to Othniel *.

* The particular enormities which prevailed during the latter interval of 10 years were the introduction of idolatry by Micah, the tragical incident of the Levite and his concubine, the defection of the Danites, the massacre of the Benjamites, and of the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead, &c.

FROM

FROM the date of the war with Cushan, to the inauguration of Saul, are 296 years ; and the chronology of the Annals extremely intricate. The arrangements of Marsham, and Bedford, come nearest to the truth of history ; but the result is approximation only, which always implies imperfection.

Is it practicable, by the aid of internal characters of time, to educe historical order out of apparent confusion ; and to elucidate what is dark in the chronology ?

FROM Othniel to the death of Gideon the years of war are 53 ; and the wars are described as in succession. The years of rest are 200. But it is presumed, that some parts of the country were involved in the calamities of war, while others enjoyed tranquillity.

To Gideon succeeded Abimelech, and after him Tolah. They judged Israel 26 years. Under the government of Jair, the successor of Tolah, broke out the war with Ammon, which lasted 18 years, and was terminated by the valour of Jephtha, who succeeded Jair. To Jephtha the king of the children of Ammon sent messengers, demanding the restoration of certain lands, once belonging to the kingdom of the Amorites. Jephtha remonstrated, that Israel had been in the possession of those lands 300 years ; that the right, established by prescription, was then unalterable, and the claim for recovery too late. Confiding, that the sword might enforce what negociation could not obtain, the Ammonites hazarded a battle, and incurred a total defeat.

TO the year of the entrance into Canaan, or the 41st from the Exodus, add 300: The computation thence exclusively, is continued to 342, which seems to have been the first of Jephtha's administration. To this date an objection occurs. The second year from the passage over Jordan was prior to the division of the country, and consequently to the possession of those lands by the Israelites. It is replied, that Moses, on certain conditions, had granted to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, all the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, with all the cities of Og, king of Bashan*; and that they had received their inheritance before the general partition†. The possession of 300 years is thus evinced.

BUT farther; the war of 18 years with Ammon, is by Jud. x. 7. comprehended in the 40 years war with the Philistines, under the joint administration of Eli and Samson, while Jair and Jephtha conducted the war with Ammon. Thus is established a decisive evidence of co-existent wars, and contemporary rulers, with local jurisdiction: and this discovery points out a justifiable and necessary expedient for reducing the amplified accounts of chronologers to the authentic notations of the sacred writers‡.

JEPHTHA subdued the Ammonites, in the year from the Exodus 342. This sum deduct from the date of

* Num. xxxii. 32, 33. † Josh. xiii. 8.

‡ Long before Marsham, Petavius suggested the scheme of coincident wars, and contemporary magistrates, between the times of Abimeleck and Saul, but the hypothesis of neither is framed with chronological precision.

Saul's inauguration 396, the difference is 54, including 18 years of Eli's government, and 36 of Samuel's : $18 + 36 = 54$.

IN the Annals, the Philistine war of 40 years terminates 20 years after the death of Eli, with the second battle at Ebenezer. It certainly ended with the first battle there fought, for, prior to the second, Samuel had officiated as supreme magistrate and high priest 20 years. But the Primate, by connecting the year subsequent to this battle with the consecration of Saul, entirely excludes Samuel from the register of the priests and judges. The sources of this mistake are obvious from the surface of the history. A minute refutation would here require a superfluous expence of arguments.

IT is not however inapposite to rectify an erroneous number in the Greek Testament, relative to this subject. "When he had destroyed the seven nations, he divided their land unto them by lot. And after that he gave unto them judges by the space of 450 years, until Samuel the prophet*." The land was divided in the 46th year after the Exodus : And $396 - 46 = 350$, which difference is the true interval from the partition to the end of Samuel's ministry. Τετρακκοσιοι, 400, had inadvertently been substituted for, τριακκοσιοι, 300, in one copy, and at last pervaded all.

UNTEXTUAL and violent is the Primate's gloss in support of this erroneous notation : "Much about 450 years after the election of the fathers, and the time of

* Acts, xiii. 19.

Isaac's birth, was the land divided." The election of the fathers, rightly dated from the call of Abraham, was about 520 years before this division; and of Isaac's birth no mention occurs in the context. The order of the apostle's words, and the strain of his argument, require the computation to proceed in the descending series from the partition, and by no means admit the retrograde order thence to the birth of Isaac.

THE history of Ruth is entirely omitted in the course of the Annals; but in the tract on Sacred Chronology*, is referred to the days of Ehud or Shamgar. Its true date is necessary to determine the time of Obed's birth: And every circumstance favours the supposition, that Elimelech retired into the land of Moab, in the time of the famine, during the seven years war with Midian†. After ten years, Naomi, having heard that the Lord had visited his people, in giving them bread, returned, with Ruth, to Bethlehem.

Arrangement of the Chronology from the Exodus to Saul.

Years after the Exodus		A. M. 2515
Moses dies	Joshua succeeds	- 40
Joshua dies - - 40		80
No supreme magistrate 20		100
War with Cushan - 8		108
After Othniel's victory 40	rest over all Canaan	148
War with Eglon - 18		166
After Ehud's victory, rest 60	over all Canaan -	226
Rest continues, south 20	War with Jabin, north	246
War with Midian, south 7	Rest after Barak's victory	253

* P. i. c. 12.

† Jud. vi. 3—11.

CHRONOLOGY of the JUDGES. 53

After Gideon's victory	40	rest over all Canaan	293
	3	Abimelech dies -	296
Eli judges in S. and W.	23	Tolah dies *	319
The Philistine war begins	1	Jair judges in N. and E.	320
	4	War with Ammon begins	324
	17	Jair dies - -	341
	1	Jephtha subdues Ammon	342
	5	----- dies -	347
	7	Ibzan dies -	354
	1	Elon succeeds -	355
Eli dies. The ark taken	4		359
Samuel succeeds -	1	End of the Philistine war	360
	4	Elon dies - -	364
	8	Abdon dies -	372
Samuel judges all Israel	1		373
----- defeats the Philistines	7		380
----- anoints Saul, and abdicates the govern- ment -	16		396
			<hr/>
			A. M. 2911.

* From the first year of Eli's government, coincident with the last of Tolah, both excluded, to the death of Abdon, the intermediate years, common to contemporary judges, are 54, equivalent to the sum retrenched in the Annals, from Joshua's ministry, and to the abridged space between the death of Samson and the accession of Saul.

Chronology of the Kings.

C H A P. I.

Rules of Computation.

HERE begins a new era, not measured by generations, as in the patriarchal ages; neither by alternate periods of war and rest; but by the reigns of kings, in a regular series. Few and obvious are the rules of computation.

1. MOSES ordained, that the years, from the Exodus progressively, should begin, about the time of the vernal equinox, with the month Abib or Nisan, the term whence the Hebrew festivals were to be regulated; though he retained the primitive order of the months, in buying, selling, and the other transactions of civil life*. From this month also were the reigns computed. For if any king ascended the throne a few days before the same month, it was reckoned to him for a whole year; and with the return of the same month began his second of the new reign†.

* Josephus, Ant. I. 3. 3.

† D. Levi's Rites and Ceremonies of the Jews, p. 22; and Sir I. Newton's Chronol. ch. iv. p. 296.

THE reigns in Judah were computed from this source; though with respect to Hezekiah, Josiah, and their successors, the Metropolitan contends, that their years were computed from the vacancy of the throne. His arguments are fallacious.

2. REIGNS of a few days, or months, are included in those before or after, agreeably to the expressed notations of time.

3. PARTNERSHIP in royalty is never to be admitted, except on the authority of the sacred writers, for one or more years. The last year of David was not comprehended in the first of Solomon; for though the latter was anointed in the currency of that year, yet was his accession not reckoned from the date of his consecration, much less from the foregoing Nisan, as in the Annals; but from the first month of the subsequent, the 81st from the inauguration of Saul*.

ASA reigned 41 years†. But he died in the 41st ‡, and the last, as incomplete, was the first of Jehoshaphat, though not so marked in the Annals. Neither was the 40th of Jehoash the first of Amaziah, though the Primate, without the least colour of historical evidence, puts them in coincidence. In the like arbitrary manner, is the first of Hezekiah lost in the 16th of Ahaz. With respect to joint reigns of more than one year, the rule is determinate.

4. IF the years common to two sovereigns were full, all belong to the senior. If he died during the currency of

* 1 K. vi. 1. and 2 Chron. iii. 2.

† 1 K. xv. 10.

‡ 2 Chron. xvi. 13.

the last, that was accounted the first of the successor. From notations abundantly decisive, certain it is, that Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat began to reign while his father was king of Judah. The reign of the son had a two-fold commencement:—One, two years before the other Jehoram ascended the throne of Samaria, while Jehoshaphat was living;—another, after his decease, in the fifth of that other Jehoram. These characters of time are infallible; though it is difficult to reconcile all the terms of coincidence. Whatever was the duration of the joint reign *, the 25th and last of the father, as incomplete, and that only, is reckoned to the son, by the first rule.

“ UZZIAH was a leper unto the day of his death, and he dwelt in a several house; and Jotham the king’s son was over the house, judging the people of the land †.” In what year of his reign this malady was inflicted, is uncertain. The text denotes continuance of time. An interval of six years may, though with less certainty, be supposed. But the notations of time, in the context, evince that the 52 years, ascribed to the father, were full, prior to the sole reign of the son.

5. IN these two reigns (for none other is to be admitted as common to two sovereigns), the genealogies require, that the specified ages of Jehoram and Jotham be computed from the first commencement of their respective reigns; and as the precise date of the conjunct sovereignty is, in neither case, defined, a sufficient

* Four years seem to be the most probable quantity.

† 2 K. xv. 5.

number of intermediate years may be assumed, for adjusting chronology to the course of nature.

6. IN some cases the reign of a minor is dated from the vacancy of the throne, as in the instance of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah * ;—in others, and particularly in that of Uzziah, from the legal age of 16. But in both cases a regency must be supposed. Josiah's age at his accession was 18 (not 8, as in all the copies). For this reason a regency is excluded.

* Concerning the father of Jehoash, the successor of Athalia, various are the sentiments of critics and expositors. He is said to have been the king's son (2 Chron. xxiii. 11.), which designation can belong to no other than Ahaziah, the predecessor of Athalia, on the throne of Judah. Jehoshеba, who concealed him in the temple, when the rest of the seed royal were cruelly put to death, was the sister of the same Ahaziah (2 Chron. xxii. 11.); and her humane care of that helpless infant seems to ascertain propinquity of relation. That he was a minor of seven years old at his accession, is expressly affirmed in parallel texts. Jehoiadah, the high priest, was his pious guardian, and regent of the kingdom, till the young prince attained the legal age: By his counsel, example, and influence, was the royal pupil instructed in religious discipline, and in the arts of government. At the protracted age of 130, died that venerable man, as is supposed, in the 27th year of this reign. Jehoash soon after degenerated into a tyrant and idolater (2 Chron. xxiv, 15—20.) Here Jehoash is characterised as the son of Ahaziah; and, in 2 Kings, xii. 18, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah, kings of Judah, are his lineal ancestors.

C H A P. II.

Chronology of Saul's Reign.

S A U L, when set apart for the sovereignty, was a choice young man, and a goodly *. “ When he had reigned two years over Israel, he chose him 3,000 men, whereof 2,000 were with Saul, in Michmash, &c. and 1,000 with Jonathan, in Gibeah †.” These notations are at variance with the course of nature. The son of a choice young man, and a goodly, cannot be supposed capable of conducting the military operations, ascribed in the context, to Jonathan. The Primate is not censured for overlooking a difficulty which had escaped the penetration of all the critics and expositors. Neither the age of Saul at his accession, nor the length of his reign, is mentioned in his history. In the text (1 Sam. xiii. 1.) both these notations were probably inserted. But the original numbers seem now to be partly lost and partly mutilated. Dr. Wall, in his note on the place, suggests, that an old scholiast, cited by Bos, filled up the blank in the first clause by the number 30. His reign was 40 years ‡. The ancient Hebrews expressed numbers, not by words at length, but by alpha-

* 1 Sam. ix. 2. † Ch. xiii. 2. ‡ Acts, xiii. 20.

betical characters. In the first clause the numerical signatures were probably (N 5 31.) and these being accidentally omitted, YEAR in the singular number only remained: In the second clause may have stood 40, which in transcribing was mistaken for 20*. The whole verse thus completed is, "Saul was 31 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 40 years over Israel." Wall adds, "Abp. Usher, adhering stiffly to the words, mangled as they are, has very much disturbed his own chronology."

OF the text, as rendered in our public version, he (the Primate) says, "It can have no fitter sense than this; that after the Philistines were subdued by Samuel, one year had passed when Saul began to reign, and that then he reigned two years free from subjection to the Philistines †."

No sense can be less fit. "For after the Philistines were subdued, Samuel went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places ‡." "When he grew old he made his sons judges over Israel, who turned aside after lucre, took bribes and perverted judgement §." They must have been some time in office, and given flagrant

* So the text 1 Sam. xiii. 1. was probably read in the days of Josephus, who circumscribes Saul's reign within the compass of 20 years, 18 during the life, and 2 after the death of Samuel. But the notation in Acts, xiii. 20. is exactly conformable with history; for David, born in the 10th of Saul's reign, succeeded him at the age of 30.

† Annals, A. M. 2909.

‡ 1 Sam. vii. 13—16.

§ Ch. viii. 1—3.

proofs

proofs of maladministration, before the elders, despairing of their reformation, presented complaints to Samuel, and requested to have a king. On the whole, much more probable it is, that Samuel judged Israel 16 years, than one only, after the second battle at Ebenezer.

THE Metropolitan proceeds: "Shortly after Saul was put from the kingdom again by the Philistines, and the Israelites again very much enthralled; which yoke, being again shaken off, Saul is said to have gotten the kingdom; that is, to have recovered it out of the Philistines hands *. Now, that this thralldom continued many years, *appeareth* by this, that, whereas it began eight years before the birth of David, yet before it ended, Samuel prophesied of his succeeding Saul in the kingdom." This train of surmises merits serious consideration.

1. THAT Saul was, after a reign of two years, divested of the kingdom, is a postulate, which has every semblance of a fiction. He is no where characterised as a dethroned sovereign, as a tributary prince, or, as a prisoner taken in war. On the contrary, he is every where represented as an independent monarch, issuing proclamations, by his own authority, levying forces, in his own dominions; conducting them to the field of battle, and at last victorious, or defeated.

2. IT does not *appear*, that the war with the Philistines, described ch. xiii. and xiv. continued many years. The history has no notations of time, no account of

* 1 Sam. xiv. 47.

armies in stationary encampments, or continually shifting their situations ; of frequent conflicts, productive of defeats and victories, on both sides. Every circumstance indicates the notion of one campaign.

3. THE text, ch. xiv. 47. does not necessarily imply that Saul *recovered* the kingdom. The phrase has a retrospect to the very commencement of his reign ; which, for many years, was prosperous and brilliant. His victories are, in this text, recapitulated : “ So Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, Ammon, Edom, the kings of Zobah *, the Philistines ; and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them.” These successful wars are most probably recorded nearly in the order of time, and that with the Philistines, marked as prior to the subsequent conflict with Amalek.

4. THE prediction, that the sceptre should be transferred from Saul to David, refers to an advanced period of Saul's reign, but does not confirm the Archbishop's position, that the Philistine war, in which Jonathan exhibited all the abilities of an accomplished general, began so early as the third year from his father's consecration.

THE fact seems to be, that the historian's intent was to transmit a very concise account of this reign, in its commencement and progress, while the monarch per-

* “ In the days of Saul the Reubenites made war with the Hagarenes, who fell by their hand, and they dwelt in their tents.” 1 Chr. v. 10. These conquests are omitted 1 Sam. xiv. 47.

62 CHRONOLOGY *of* SAUL'S REIGN.

severed in his duty. It was his primary object to expatiate on that period of his administration, which exemplified such instances of misconduct, as justify, to every succeeding age, the equity of Providence, in removing Saul's family from the throne.

THESE remarks suggest the expediency of having recourse to a transposition in the order of historical occurrences, that chronology may be brought into concord with the course of nature.

THE proposed connexion is: "Saul was 31 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 40 years over Israel *."

"SO Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines; and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them †."

"SAUL chose him 3,000 men of Israel, whereof 2,000 were with Saul in Michmash, and in Mount Bethel; and 1,000 were with Jonathan, in Gibeah of Benjamin; and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent ‡"

"And he gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them §."

"Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan and Ishui," &c. Of Saul's four sons Jonathan's name always

* 1 Sam. xiii. 1.

† Ch. xiv. 47.

‡ Ch. xiii. 2. read forward to ch. xiv. 46.

§ V. 47, 48.

occurs first in the register;—a probable criterion of primogeniture. Ishbosheth, or Elhbaal, was 40 years old at the time of the tragical overthrow on Gilboa. Admit that Jonathan was a few years older: Yet neither age nor experience qualified him for the military glory he is thought to have acquired in the third of his father's reign. But suppose the war, in which he gathered so many laurels, began and ended in the 28th of that reign, the whole history is consistent with itself, and chronology in exact unison with the course of nature. Thus is the perplexity, resulting from the incoherent computation in the Annals, untwisted.

Dates corrected, with the chronological characters.

Years after the Exodus	-	395	W.	J. P.	B. C.
Saul anointed	-	396	2911	3616	1097
Reigns prosperously 27 years	-	423	2938	3643	1070
Defeats the Philistines by the heroism of Jonathan	-	424	2939	3644	1069
Subdues Amalek	-	425	2940	3645	1068
David privately anointed	-	426	2941	3646	1067
Saul and his sons slain in battle		436	2951	3656	1057

This division of Saul's reign, into parts, on the authority of the sacred writers, sufficiently disproves the notation of Josephus, who diminishes its duration by one half. But it has already been suggested, that the original text had, before his time, been corrupted by an interchange of numerical signatures.

C H A P. III.

Chronology from the Death of Saul to the Temple.

DAVID'S reign in Hebron, over Judah and Benjamin, commenced from the death of his predecessor. After seven years and six months, all the elders of Israel came and anointed him king over all Israel and Judah. His subsequent reign in Jerusalem was 33 years, including the odd six months; so that the interval from the death of Saul to that of David was precisely 40 years, computed from Abib.

Two instances of anachronism, during this reign, occur in the Annals.

I. "IT came to pass after 40 years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow in Hebron *." No term whence the computation begins, is expressed. The Primate reckons from the consecration of David in the 30th of Saul. But that, being a private deed, was not likely to be used as a common term in reckoning. From the context it is evident that the number 40 is by a mistake put for 4. Absalom, after the murder of his brother Amnon, fled to Geshur, and dwelt there three years †. By the

* 2 Sam. vii. 15:

† 2 Sam. xiii. 38.

secret influence of Joab was he recalled and lived two full years in Jerusalem, but saw not the king's face *. Having obtained access into the royal presence, and a gracious reception, he, by the arts of popularity, strengthened his interest, prepared horses, chariots, and footmen ; and at the end of two years more requested permission to retire to Hebron, as above related. Josephus, conformably to the Sacred History, dates this request from Absalom's return out of Geshur to Jerusalem †. Grotius adopts the correction, and Kennicott confirms it by the authority of the Syriac version of Sixtus V.'s famous edition, and of certain excellent MSS. of the Vulgate ;—all which read 4 not 40.

2. SOLOMON was anointed to the succession, six months, as the Primate computes, before the decease of David : And the 40 full years, assigned to the reign of the father, he considers as complete in the first month before the son was consecrated. From that first month is the new reign counted in the Annals, a full half year before the demise of the father.

SAUL was anointed privately about the time of the passover, in the year from the Exodus 396. About seven weeks after, in the time of wheat harvest, Samuel resigned his commission as supreme magistrate. Count forward 80 years for that and the subsequent reign, the reckoning is continued to the first month of the year 476. Solomon might have been anointed six months before his father's death. But it was not the usage of the Hebrews to account the last complete year

* 2 Sam. xiv. 24.

† Ant. vii. 9. 1.

66 CHRONOLOGY *from the Death of SAUL, &c.*

of a senior monarch the first of his successor. Solomon's sole reign began with Abib, 477 from the Exodus; for in the second month, in the 480th year after the children of Israel were come out of Egypt, and in the 4th of his reign, Solomon laid the foundation of the house of the Lord *.

JOSEPHUS disagrees not only with the canonical records, concerning the length of the interval from Adam, from the deluge, from the arrival of Abraham in Canaan, and from the egress, to the foundation of the temple; but also with himself, in different parts of his works; even when the same events and times are his subject †. Strong was his predilection in favour of an amplified chronology. In two characters of the time he confirms the authority of the sacred Annals, affirming that the work of the Temple was begun in the second month of the ecclesiastical Hebrew year, and in the fourth of Solomon. That month he farther connects with the Macedonian Artemisius; and that year with the eleventh of Hiram, king of Tyre, as in the same passage; or with the 12th, as in the 16th section of his first Book against Apion.

* 1 K. vi. 1—37.

† Ant. iii. 3. 1.

*Fifth Age of the World. From the Foundation to
the Overthrow of the Temple.*

C H A P. I.

Chronology of Solomon's Reign.

HENCE commences a new term of computation. “ It came to pass, at the end of 20 years after Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the Lord, and his own house, that Solomon gave to Hiram twenty cities.” The 24th of his reign is thus characterised, as the 20th from the foundation of the Temple exclusively.

THREE years having been spent in providing materials for this great work, it was finished in seven years, in the 8th month of the 11th year from the death of David. That the dedication might derive solemnity from one of the national festivals, it was deferred to the Feast of Tabernacles in the subsequent year. The Primate assigns another reason for this delay ;—that it might coincide with the return of the ninth jubile. But that year was not concurrent with the source of computation from the division of the land, and these observances were totally neglected from the consecration of Saul, to the days of Nehemiah.

68 CHRONOLOGY of SOLOMON'S REIGN.

AFTER Solomon had employed thirteen years more in building his own house, he proceeded to raise numerous and magnificent structures about Jerusalem, and in other parts of his dominions, twenty cities in Galilee, Hazor, Megiddo, Tadmora, or Palmyra, in the wilderness, cities of store, &c. : all which works of use and grandeur, justify the supposition, that he continued many years in the practice of those virtues which attracted the admiration both of his subjects and of foreign princes. After he had finished all the stupendous enterprises recorded in his history, he continued to frame his life by the principles of piety and wisdom ; for three times a year he offered burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he had built*. This intimation implies perseverance during a series of years ; and it was not till after he was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods †.

AN accurate computation allows only 39 full years for his reign. The 40th, as incomplete, is accounted the first of Rehoboam. As a memorial of the schism, which gave rise to the unhappy distinction between the Samaritans and Jews, the ancient Hebrews, who adhered to the tribe of Judah, kept a yearly fast on the 23d day of the 3d month from the first of Rehoboam.

This fact, as to the year, is with no less certainty authenticated, by Jeroboam's appointment of a feast in the eighth month, like unto the feast of the seventh month in Judah ‡.

* 1 K. ix. 25.

† Chap. xi. 1—8.

‡ 1 K. xii. 32.

CHRONOLOGY of SOLOMON'S REIGN. 69

ABSTRACT of the chronology from Saul to the apostacy of the ten tribes.

Years after the Exodus	-	435	W.	J. P.	B. C.
David begins to reign in Hebron		436	2951	3656	1057
————— in Jerusalem		343	2958	3663	1050
Uriah slain in battle	-	354	2969	3674	1039
Solomon born	-	456	2971	3676	1037
Amnon slain, Absalom flees to Geshur	- -	458	2973	3678	1035
Absalom recalled	- -	461	2976	3681	1032
Goes to Hebron, and rebels		462	2980	3685	1028
Solomon anointed, David dies		473	2991	3696	1017
Solomon's sole reign begins		474	2992	3697	1016
The Temple founded	-	480	2995	3700	1013
Dedicated	- -	8	3003	3708	1005
Rehoboam born	-	1	3004	3709	1004
Solomon dies, revolt of the ten tribes	- -	26	3030	3735	998

THE subsequent years are not counted from the date of the Temple; but from a prophetical period of 390 years, commencing with the first of Rehoboam, A. M. 3031, and ending with the breaking up of the city, in the 11th of Zedekiah, 3421. If the 36 years prior to the accession of Rehoboam be comprehended in the reckoning, the whole duration of the first Temple is 426 years.

C H A P. II.

Chronology from Solomon to Athalia.

WITH the defection of ten tribes from the house of David, the sceptre of Rehoboam, and a pure worship, begins a new series of contemporary and independent kings. The two royal calendars, being exact counterparts, augment the labour of comparing dates, but hence computation acquires precision and certainty. In Judah the reigns are longer than those in Samaria, and, as fewer broken years occur, the register of the former claims the preference, as a regulating measure: The years characterised as coincident do not always run parallel. Sufficient it is, that they touch in one common point. Sometimes the same year, making a part of two reigns, is twice counted. To discriminate such notations is the province of critical skill. In this period the sum of the reigns in Jerusalem is 95, and at Samaria 98. As Rehoboam and Jeroboam ascended their respective thrones at the same time, so Ahaziah and Jehoram perished together. The interval, therefore, ought to be the same by both calendars. To bring them to an equation, it is previously requisite to examine, whether all the years in the Chronicles of the Kings in Judah were full.

CHRONOLOGY *from* SOLOMON *to* ATHALIA. 71

It has already been noted, that the 41st of Afa, and the 25th of Jehoshaphat, being incomplete, are severally accounted the first of the subsequent reigns. Thus is the duration of the six reigns in Judah reduced to 93. The nine in Samaria, tried by this standard, may be circumscribed within the same limits.

ANALYSIS of the reigns from A. M. 3030, to 3123.

Judah.			Samaria.			Judah.			Samaria.		
Rehoboam	17		Jeroboam	17	17	Jehoshaphat	20		Ahaziah	1	80
Abijah	3			20	20	Jehoram's	2	21		2	81
Afa	1			21	21	joint reign	2	22	Joram	1	82
	2		Nadab	1	22		3	23		2	83
	3		Baalha	2	1		4	24		3	84
	26		Elah	1	24	Sole reign	1	25		4	85
	27			2	47			2		5	86
			Zimri					3		6	87
			Omri		1			4		7	88
	28			2	48			5		8	89
	38		Ahab	1	12			6		9	90
	39			2	59			7		10	91
Jehoshaphat	41			4	61	Ahaziah	2			11	92
	2			5	62		1			12	93 *
	19			22	79						

FROM the scheme of co-existent sovereigns it is obvious, that the four years assigned to Nadab and Elah are comprehended in the reigns of Jeroboam, Baalha, and Omri, on the throne of Israel. The last of Jeroboam coincides with the first of Afa, and the first of Omri with the 27th; so that the intermediate years in the kingdom of Samaria are, by the numbers of reference, reduced from 30 to 26. Ahab began to reign in the 38th of Afa, which was the 12th of Omri, who dying before its termination, the whole year is accounted the first of Ahab.

* Abp. Usher extends this period to 95.

72 CHRONOLOGY *from SOLOMON to ATHALIA.*

IN each chronicle a few notations, seemingly discordant, occur.

“ IN the 36th year of Afa, Baasha came up against Judah *.” But, “ In the 26th of Afa, Elah the son of Baasha began to reign over Israel †.” Of this invasion the true date was certainly the 26th of Afa; for Josephus appositely remarks, that Baasha, after a repulse, returned immediately to his own country, and being prevented by death, had no leisure to meditate expeditions against Judah.

“ IN the 27th of Afa, Omri set fire to Zimri’s palace, and burnt it over him, so that he perished in the conflagration ‡.” But Omri’s reign is dated from the 31st of Afa §. This apparent incongruity is obviated in the context. The people was divided. One faction made Omri king, another declared in favour of Tibni: After a conflict of four years Tibni died, and Omri reigned.

“ AHAZIAH the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in the 17th of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, and reigned two years ||.” From the history it is probable that Ahab, alarmed by the awful threatenings denounced against him on account of Nabal’s murder, took his son Ahaziah into a partnership in the sovereignty three years before his death, though these, conformably to the usual mode of computation, are included in his reign of 22 years. The true date of this conjunct reign is the 17th of Jehoshaphat, as above expressed, and the two

* 2 Chr. xvi. 1.

† 1 K. xvi. 19.

§ Ver. 23.

‡ 1 K. xvi. 8.

|| 1 K. xxii. 51.

years of the son's sole reign are counted from the decease of the father.

“JEHORAM, the son of Ahab, king of Israel, began to reign in the 18th of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, and reigned 12 years*.” This arrangement excludes two years from the reign of Ahab with the two subsequent years of his immediate successor, Ahaziah, and extends the reign of this Jehoram to 16. But certain it is, that prior to the accession of Jehoram king of Samaria, his brother Ahaziah consulted with Jehoshaphat, concerning an expedition to Ophir, in the interval from the death of Ahab. Jehoram, therefore, was not invested with sovereignty so early as the 18th of Jehoshaphat, for in the 19th Ahab died. By some incidental mistake in transcribing this text, 18 is substituted for 22; and the error is repeated in the Septuagint, and other versions.

THE reign of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, had a double commencement; the one in his father's lifetime, the other at the vacancy of the throne. For Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, in Samaria, having died without a son, was succeeded by his brother Jehoram, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah †; and, “in the fifth of Joram, the son of Ahab, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, began his son Jehoram to reign ‡.”

* 2 K. iii. 1.

† 2 K. i. 17.

‡ Ch. viii. 16.

74 CHRONOLOGY *from* SOLOMON *to* ATHALIA.

THESE two notations imply, that Jehoram began twice to reign in Judah, while his father was living, and both are accurate. In the 21st of Jehoshaphat began the conjunct reign; so that the 22d was the first of Joram in Samaria, and the second of Jehoram in Judah. Again, Jehoshaphat died during the currency of his 25th year, which being incomplete, was accounted the first of his son's sole reign, coincident with the fifth of Joram in Samaria. At the beginning of this year Jehoshaphat was living; but his reign in full years did not exceed 24. The result of a minute scrutiny into the phraseology of the sacred writers, is sufficient to convince every intelligent and candid reader, that some expressions, seemingly contradictory, are examples of the strictest precision.

Both the eleventh and twelfth of Joram in Israel are assigned for the one year of Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram in Judah *. These dates exclude both perplexity and error. In the last year of his father's reign and life, Ahaziah had been invested with royalty, as copartner in the government. But as the senior sovereign lived to the end of that year, the son's accession is computed from the 12th of Joram, king of Israel.

THE age of Jehoram, king of Judah, when he began to reign, was 32 †. The subsequent genealogies require, that his reign be computed from the 21st of his father inclusively. In the first of his sole reign he was 36 years old, and after a reign of eight years, he died at the age of 44. His son Ahaziah succeeded him

* 2 Kings, ix. 29. and viii. 25.

† 2 Kings, viii. 17.

at the age of 42 *. This egregious mistake in the original text, is, as Kennicott observes, happily corrected in an excellent MS. supposed to be 800 years old, where the number is 22, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions. This is likewise the reading in the editions of the Septuagint, by Aldus, and by Wechelius, 1697. But the most decisive authority is that of the parallel Hebrew text †, where all the copies, manuscript and printed, with all the versions, exhibit the less number, which seems to have been originally marked with the numerical letters כ כ, 22, and afterwards inadvertently changed into כ מ, 42, in one copy of the text in the Chronicles. In process of time the erroneous notation became general, while the true reading in the parallel passage was retained. In computation it is an invariable rule, that historical consistency is more to be regarded, than notes of number, which, if casually interchanged, or otherwise varied, are a source of perplexity in reckoning by generations.

By the aid of chronological characters, applied to coexistent reigns, are the years of the kings of Israel, adjusted to those of Judah, in this period, the common measure being 93, in perfect harmony with the reports of the Sacred Chronicle. Two numbers only deviate from the truth of computation, the 36th of Aza is put for the 26th, and the 18th for the 22d of Jehoshaphat. But such mistakes, as are discoverable by comparing the context with itself, lead to no deception.

* 2 Chron. xxii. 2.

† 2 Kings, viii. 26.

C H A P. III.

From Athalia to the Reduction of Samaria.

IN his Treatise on the Sacred Chronology the venerable Primate remarks, that the sum of the reigns over Judah, in this period, is 165; those over Israel 143 years 7 months; the deficiency being 21 years 5 months. With respect to the former series, the author deviates from his arrangement in the Annals, where the interval is restricted to 163. The larger number is a correction justified by the sacred registers. Yet by a strange fatality, he proceeds to an equation, and retrenching one year from the reign of Jehoshaphat, another from Ahaz, restores the deficient number. As no hint of an incomplete year, or of a joint administration, occurs in either case, this abridgement is inadmissible. In the former period, the subject of the preceding chapter, it is recorded, that Aza died in the 41st year from his accession; and that the first of Jehoram's sole reign, began while Jehoshaphat was king of Judah. These hints, had the Metropolitan attended to them, gave him full authority for reducing the space between Solomon and Athalia from 95 to 93 years. If no other unchronological abbreviations had been made, the length of
the

the interval from the accession of Rehoboam to the dispersion of the apostate tribes, would have agreed with every recorded criterion of the intermediate times.

THIS period may conveniently be divided into two parts.

I. From the death of Ahaziah to that of Uzziah, kings of Judah, the sum of the reigns is 127. Uzziah and Pekahiah, king of Israel, died in the same year. From the 12th of Joram, exclusively, to the death of Pekahiah, must likewise intervene 127 years. Jeroboam II, in Samaria, died 14 years after the beginning of Uzziah's personal reign in Judah, which was the 13th from the death of Amaziah; and $13 + 14 = 27$, connect the 41st, or last, year of Jeroboam with the 27th of Uzziah, thus:

Athalia	-	6	Jehu	-	28
Jehoash	-	40	Jehoahaz		17
Amaziah	-	29	Joash	-	16
Uzziah	-	27	Jeroboam		41
		<hr/>			<hr/>
		102			102

UZZIAH reigned 52 years, and consequently lived 25 after Jeroboam. But the reigns of Jeroboam's successors, from Zachariah to Pekahiah, both included, make but 12 years 7 months. Here is a deficiency of 11 years 5 months, the complement of 25.

It must be presumed, that from the 27th to the 38th of Uzziah, when Zachariah ascended the vacant throne, was a season of anarchy in Samaria. Suppose it to have lasted 11 years nearly; for though Zachariah's six months began in the 38th, they ended in the 39th.

IN this year he was slain by Shallum ; and Shallum, after one full month, by Menahem. According to the usual rule of computation, the whole year should have been reckoned to Menahem. But his right to the throne was not immediately recognized. Of a throne, acquired by blood, he could not obtain possession, without violence. Those inhabitants, who would not open their cities to him, he smote with the sword, and ripped up the women with child. At last, despairing of success, he bribed Pul, king of Assyria, with 1000 talents of silver, to confirm the kingdom in his hand, and prevailed.

THE time of this conflict for domination, it is reasonable to suppose, was two years, including the few months assigned to Zachariah and Shallum. Having forcibly invaded the throne, he reigned 10 years, and was succeeded by Pekaiah, his son, who died after two years. The reigns in Samaria subsequent to the demise of Jeroboam, adjusted to the remaining years of Uzziah in Jerusalem, are as follow :

Uzziah	-	27	Jeroboam dies.		
		38	11	Interreign	- - 11
		39	1	Zachariah and Shallum	1
		40	1	Interreign	- - 1
		50	10	Menahem	- 10
Uzziah dies	-	52	2	Pekaiah dies	- 2
		<hr/>			<hr/>
		25			25
		+ 102			+ 102
		<hr/>			<hr/>
		127			127

II. THE remaining division of this period comprehends the two reigns of Jotham and Ahaz with the first six years of Hezekiah:— $16 + 16 + 6 = 38$. In the chronicle of the contemporary kings in Israel, 20 years only are assigned to Pekah, and 9 to Hoshea; the deficiency 9. Two notations in the register indicate a successful expedient for ascertaining the equality of the numbers.

I. PEKAH was slain in the 20th year from the death of Uzziah, or 4th of Ahaz, which the sacred historian, by a very unusual mode of expression, calls the 20th of Jotham the son of Uzziah*. Jotham reigned but 16 years. Pekah was, therefore, murdered in the fourth of his successor. But here an objection occurs. “In the second year of Pekah, king of Israel, began Jotham, king of Judah, to reign†.” Consequently the first of Pekah was coincident both with the second of his predecessor Pekahiah, and also with the 52d of Uzziah, on the throne of Judah. But, if one invariable rule in computation be applied, the objection will disappear. Pekah most probably ascended the throne of Israel a few days or weeks before the death of Uzziah, who it may be presumed did survive the then ensuing month of Abib, whence the second of Pekah, according to the usual mode of computation, began. From the same term likewise was counted the first of Jotham. Yet, the far greater part of the same year being common to both princes, the sacred historian, by connecting the

* 2 Kings, xv. 30.

† V. 32.

20th of Pekah with the 20th from the demise of Ūziah exclusively, intimates, that, in this one instance, he deviates from the general rule of counting a few days or weeks a whole year.

2. THE reign of Hoshea, in Samaria, is dated from the 12th of Ahaz * ; that is, eight full years after the murder of Pekah. Here is a decisive intimation of an interreign in Israel. To Hoshea is assigned a reign of nine years. But the 20 years of Pekah, the nine of Hoshea, and the eight of an interreign, is no more than 37, or less by unity than 38, the interval from the death of Uzziah to the sixth of Hezekiah inclusively. This defect may be supplied, by supposing, that, in the 12th of Ahaz, Hoshea, either by force, or by the consent of the people, had surmounted the resistance of an opposite faction, and that his reign is to be computed from the 13th of Ahaz. Thus are the reigns of the kings, in the rival states, brought to an exact equation.

Jotham	-	16	Pekah	-	20
Ahaz	-	16	Interreign		9
Hezekiah	-	6	Hoshea	-	9
		—			—
		38			38
		+127			+127
		—			—
		165			165
		+93			+93
		—			—
		258			258

* 2 Kings, xvii. 1.

USHER allows but 254 years from the revolt to the removal of the ten tribes. The reason of this abbreviation has already been assigned. In the Annals the birth of Arphaxad and of Abraham is anticipated each by one year. A third is retrenched from the reign of Jehoshaphat, and a fourth from that of Ahaz. These mistakes being rectified, the reduction of Samaria is brought down to its true date A. M. 3288, not 3284.

“THEY who make operose explications of little difficulties, are more solicitous in defending the chronology of the scripture, than it needeth. In reckoning the times, the sacred writers do not insist on the niceties of odd months, days, or parts of a year*.” Even this remark is more *than it needeth*. No other historians are so careful to distinguish incomplete from full years, to characterize excurrent months, and days, by the years of co-existent reigns, and to suggest more hints than are strictly necessary to the truth of computation. Of the inspired authors this is one peculiar mark of perfection. In the foregoing arrangements the utmost regard has been had to those numbers of reference, without which it would have been impossible to methodise the history of this period; and it is, with much satisfaction, discovered, that all are perfectly consistent. Subjoined are the synchronisms in the reigns from the 93d year subsequent to the death of Solomon, exhibited at one view.

* Wall's note on 2 Kings, ix. 29.

Judah.		Samaria.		Judah.		Samaria.	
Athalia	6	Jehu	6 99	Uzziah	51	Pekahiah	1 219
Jehoath	1		7 100		52	Pekah	2 220
	22		28 121	Jotham	1		1 221
	23	Jehoahaz	1 122		16		16 236
	39		17 138	Ahaz	1		17 237
	40	Joash	1 139		2		18 238
Amaziah	1		2 140		3		19 239
	15		16 154		4	Pekah slain	20 240
	16	Jeroboam	1 155		13	Interreign	9 249
	29		14 168		14	Hoshea *	1 250
Uzziah a	} 12		26 180		15		2 251
Minor					16		3 252
Personal	} 13		27 181	Hezekiah	1		4 253
reign					2		5 254
	27		41 195		3		6 255
	38	Interreign	11 206		4		7 256
	39	Zachariah	} 1 207		5		8 257
		and Shal-		The ten	} 6	carried away	9 258
		hum		tribes			
	40	Interreign	1 208				
	50	Menahem	10 218				

It merits regard, that the long reign of Uzziah happily serves, as an adjusting measure, for seven short reigns, and three vacancies of the throne in Samaria.

* Hoshea's first year is connected with the 12th of Ahaz (2 Kings, xvii. 1.). In the table it coincides with the 14th. This apparent discord of dates admits a very probable compromise. In the 12th of Ahaz, either by consent or computation, Hoshea might obtain the sovereignty; but the sacred historian judged it proper to include the nine full years of usurpation, and to compute the reign of the same quantity from the 14th of Ahaz, in which it most probably ended. Some part of the same year might be common to both princes, though it did not begin and end with the same day of the co-existent reigns.

C H A P. IV.

From the Removal of the Ten Tribes to the Conflagration of the First Temple.

THAT useful directory, the Chronicle of Samaria, unavoidably ceased with the political existence of that establishment. Its use, however, is happily superseded by Ptolemy's Mathematical Canon, which opens 26 years prior to the extinction of the kingdom in Israel, and terminates with the reign of Antoninus the Philosopher, one full century after the Christian era.

THE reigns in Judah are still computed from Abib. But to all of them the Annals assign another date from different months of their several years. The authorities produced from the sacred records, if properly interpreted, do not establish the author's positions, a full examination of which is reserved for the enlarged Arrangements, where it will be shewn, that his conclusions are at variance with the chronology and history of the times.

THIS period ends with A. M. 3421, ⁵²¹427 years after the foundation of the Temple. But from the 39th of Solomon's reign exclusively, 3030, begins a new

source of computation, by the noted term of 390 years, beyond which the punishment of Israel's apostacy was not to be deferred*.

As a regulating measure for the remaining reigns in Judah, it is requisite to set those of Chaldea in juxtaposition. An abbreviated scheme follows.

Jerusalem.		Babylon.		Jerusalem.		Babylon.	
Hezekiah	7	Mard.Em-	2 259	Josiah	16	Nabopol-	1 354
	17	padius	12 269	Jehoahaz	31	assar	16 369
	22	Archianus	5 274	Jehoiakim	1		17 370
	24	Interreign	2 276		4	Nebuchad-	120 373
	27	Belibus	3 279		5	nezzar†	221 374
	28	Aprona-	1 280		6		3 375
	29	dus	2 281		7		4 376
Manasseh	1		3 282		8		5 376
	4		6 285		9		6 377
	5	Regilibus	1 286		10		7 378
	9	Mecessi-	} 4 290	Jehoiachin	11		8 379
		morda-		Zedekiah	1		9 380
		cus			2		10 381
	17	Interreign	8 298		3		11 382
	30	Efarhad-	} 13 311		4		12 383
		don			5		13 384
	50	Saosdu-	} 20 331		6		14 385
		chinus			7		15 386
	51	Nebuchado-	1 332		8		16 387
	55	nosor	5 336		9		17 388
Amon	2		7 338		10		18 389
Josiah	1		8 339		11		19 390
	15		22 353				

A. M. 3421

* See Ezekiel, iv.

† Daniel, adopting the computation of Chaldea, where he wrote his Prophecies, dates Nebuchadnezzar's reign from the death of his father. But all the other sacred authors reckon from the fourth of Jehoiakim.

The duration of the divine forbearance with the idolatrous Israelites, presignified to Ezekiel, was limited to 390 years, the last of which began in the tenth of Zedekiah, which was the 18th of Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxxii. 1.; and ended on the ninth of the fourth month in the subsequent year, when the famine was sore in the city, and Zedekiah bound with fetters. 2 Kings, xxiv. 5—7.

Stages

Stages of the Siege according to the Hebrew and Roman Calendar.

	A. M.	Heb.	Rom.
Zedekiah's 9th year begins	3419	Abib 1	April 10 m.
Seige begun	-	3420 Shebat 10	Jan. 14 th.
10th of Zedekiah begins		Abib 1	April 28 f.
Siege renewed	-	Sivan 16	July 12 f.
11th of Zedekiah begins	3421	Abib 1	April 17 t.
Famine prevails. The siege raised		Tamuz 10	July 26 th.
Conflagration of the temple		Ab 10	Aug. 25 f.
Captives carried to Babylon			20 Sept. 4 t.

THESE Arrangements, the result of calculations, constructed on infallible characters of time, expressed in several concurrent texts, evince, that the years of Zedekiah are not computed, as in the Annals, from the tenth day of the fourth month, and that the eleventh in particular, did not expire till the end of the eighth month exclusively from the date of his captivity.

IF from the breaking up the city, on the 26th July, 390 years be counted back, to the first of Rehoboam, which was the 40th of Solomon, their commencement, without regard to the Hebrew lunar form, will coincide with Wednesday the 27th July A. M. 3031, the true historical term, whence the establishment of idol-worship in Samaria is to be computed.

USHER, Prideaux, Bedford, and others, continue the currency of the 390 years to the 23d of Nebuchadnezzar, when Nebuzaradan returned to Jerusalem; and thence carried away into Babylon 745 captives *.

* Jer. lii. 30.

THIS obvious metachronism is the unavoidable consequence of taking four full years from the age of the world, and of connecting the historical date of our Lord's nativity with A.M. 4000. But the origin of this mistake is not now the subject of discussion. Its effects must be examined. It contradicts the numbers and imagery of the prophetic vision in the fourth chapter of Ezekiel ;—nay, perverts the very terms by which the whole is explained. The complex apparatus relates entirely to a then future siege of Jerusalem ;—a siege of a determinate length ;—neither more nor less than 390 natural days. These natural days represented as many natural years in past historical time. If the first of the 390 days represented the first of the 390 years, evident is the absurdity of affirming, that the 390th year and the 390th day had a different termination.

FROM the time of raising the siege, 40 days more were to intervene before the carrying away of Judah into captivity. These represent as many years of the divine patience towards the tribes of Judah and Benjamin (comprehending also the remains of the ten other tribes, who had adhered to the house of David, since the reduction of Samaria) ; and are counted in the scheme from the 10th of Tamuz to the 20th of Ab. The 40 correspondent years are numbered from the beginning of Jeremiah's ministry, in the 13th of Josiah.

Sixth Age of the World.

C H A P. I.

From the Restoration of the Jews to the Fall of the Persian Empire.

IN the interval, from the 19th of Nebuchadnezzar to the first of Cyrus, very little is recorded of the Hebrew captives, while exiles from their country.

FOR connecting the history of this people, and the chronology of the subsequent times, with the Mathematical Syntaxis of Ptolemy, is wanted a counterpart, similar to the Royal Calendar in Judah. From this defect arises the loss of a national directory in computation. A register, though not compiled wholly by inspired writers, neither in the form of a national directory, occurs. Its materials exist, though in a state of dispersion, among the records of various nations. This was precisely the condition of the Jews themselves, after the dissolution of their monarchy. But still the semblance of supremacy was preserved, in the persons of certain chiefs, called Princes of the Captivity, or in high priests, often invested with the functions of magistracy. In the sacred and apocryphal books, as far as they extend, are preserved the names, number, and

order of succession, in which such princes, or pontiffs, obtained jurisdiction, from the first of Cyrus, to the nominal sovereignty of Herod, when the high priesthood ceased to be hereditary. Much useful information of this sort, is likewise contained in the Alexandrine Chronicle * ; but especially in Josephus, who is much more accurate in his accounts of the high priests, subsequent to the close of the Hebrew canon, than in the times of the Judges and Kings.

AT the time of Zedekiah's degradation, Seraiah was put to death at Riblah, after he had worn the mitre about 13 years. During the captivity we read of no other high priest than his son, Josadac. Probable it is, that he did not all that time hold this honourable rank. If he did not, he might have been succeeded by an elder Son, or, as was not unusual, in the event of a minority, by a priest in the collateral line, till Jeshua should attain the legal age of consecration. Invested with this character he returned with Zorobabel, and retained the dignity 53 years.

AN objection is to be removed. In the second year of Cyrus, Jeshua had sons appointed to set forward the work of the Temple ; which implies an advanced age at the time of the return from Babylon, and renders improbable the hypothesis of so very long a pontificate †.

* It was first discovered in an old library in Sicily. One copy was brought to Rome, another afterwards to Augsburgh in Germany, where it was translated and published in 1624. Prideaux prefers, in many things, its authority to that of Africanus and Eusebius.

† Ezra, iii. 9.

BUT

BUT Jeshua the high priest is always characterized as the son of Josadac. Whereas the Jeshua in the specified text, and in all others, where his name occurs, was of the Levites, a class inferior even to that of the ordinary priests *. The Jeshua, whose sons set forward the work of the house of the Lord, was the Levite, and is always mentioned with Kadmiel.

IN this period Aaron's rod began to blossom afresh, when the prerogatives, annexed for a time, to the sceptre of Judah, were restricted to his own tribe.

Primo avulso, non deficit alter
Aureus, & simili frondescit virga metallo. VIRG.

One pluck'd away, a second branch ye see
Shoot forth in gold, and glitter thro' the tree. PITT.

SUCH are the numerous records, whence may be constructed a competent directory for regulating the chronology of the times, to which the canonical history does not reach. In certain notations they differ from one another. To them is not ascribed the attribute of infallibility. The writings even of the inspired historians and prophets seem in some things to disagree. But apparently discordant passages being brought to the test of sound criticism, conformably to the course of nature, and the truth of computation, every colour of ambiguity, error, or imposture, acquires the aspect of credibility.

* See Ezra ii. 40. Neh. vii. 43.—x. 9 —xii. 8. 24. See also Dr. Wall's note on Ezra, iii. 9 ; and Prideaux, vol. i. 215. fol. edition.

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS of the Jewish history, under the princes of the captivity, and high priests, connected with the reigns in Babylon and Persia, from the overthrow of the first temple to the rise of the Greek empire; together with the corrected dates, misplaced, in Usher's Annals.

Years from the death of Seraiah, A. M. 3421.

Josadac	Nebuchad- } nezzar }	26	Eliashib	1	12	125
	Evil Merodac	2	Nehemiah's	9	Commission	20 133
	Neriglissar	4	Eliashib	10	Art. Long.	21 134
	Belshazzar	17		30		41 154
	Dar. Medus	2		31	Dar. Nothus	1 155
Jeshua	1 Cyrus	1		40		9 163
	7	7	Joiadah	1		11 165
	15 Cambyfes }	8	End of the	5	Sacred hist.	15 169
	Smerdis }	66		9		19 173
	16 Dar. Hyft.	1		10	Art. Mnem.	1 174
	51	36		40		31 204
	52 Xerxes	1	Jonathan	1		32 205
Jeshua dies	53	2		15		46 219
Joiakim	1	3		16	Ochus	1 220
	19	21		32		17 236
	20 Art. Long.	1	Jadduz	1		18 237
The 70 }	26 begin	7		4		21 240
weeks }	30	11		6	Arogus	2 243
					Codom.	4 247
						A. M. 3668

IT now remains, that the anachronisms in the Annals be reduced to the natural order of genuine history.

I. THE identity of Cambyfes, the son of Cyrus, with the Abasuerus mentioned Ezra, iv. 6; and of Smerdis, the magian, with the Artaxerxes, in the seventh verse, is an arbitrary hypothesis of Usher, and rashly adopted by Prideaux and Bedford.

CAMBYSES, and his successor Smerdis, the impostor, occupied the Persian throne from the demise of Cyrus to the accession of Darius Hystaspis, a short period of eight years, according to the report of the most credible

ble historians, and the computation of Ptolemy, the mathematician. In the sacred history it is recorded, "That the people of the land," that is, the disaffected Samaritans, "weakened the hands of the people in Judah, and troubled them in building (the Temple), all the days of Cyrus, even unto the reign of Darius, king of Persia." This interval comprehends 14 years.

NONE of the Pagan writers has distinguished Cambyfes by the name of Ahafuerus; and though Smerdis had several names, which are well known, yet that of Artaxerxes was certainly not of the number.

THE opposition raised by evil counsellors, who had been hired to frustrate the purpose of the builders, prior to the reign of Darius Hystaspis, seems to have been the project of a tumultuous faction at home, without the knowledge or authority of the Persian court. If the deputy governors in Samaria, instigated by the adversaries of Judah, did transmit to Cambyfes, in the commencement of his reign, a remonstrance against the rebuilding of the Temple, no evidence of his prohibiting the work, by a royal edict, exists. Improbable it is, that he would reverse a national deed, so lately and solemnly ratified by his father. His short and bustling reign, embroiled with foreign wars, particularly the conquest of Egypt, left him but few and short intervals, for the administration of Persia; much less for interfering with the affairs of remote provinces.

SMERDIS, during the few months of his usurpation, solicitous to conceal the infamy of his mutilated ears,
and

and to guard against the apprehended danger of a violent death, seldom appeared in public, and discharged few functions of royalty. Besides, before the Samaritans could obtain an answer to their complaint (if any were produced), he had undergone the punishment due to his imposture and treason.

THE conclusion from these premises is, that the resistance to the building of the Temple, from the time of Cyrus to Darius, proceeded wholly from the malevolence of the Samaritan faction, without the approbation of the intermediate princes, Cambyfes and Smerdis.

BUT in the second year of Darius, Tatnai, the Deputy Governor in Samaria, with his companions, tried, though without effect, to hinder the elders of Judah from proceeding to build the house of the Lord. A letter was sent from Samaria to Darius, setting forth, that the Jews had begun, and were still continuing in that work, under the pretended sanction of authority from Cyrus. The remonstrants submitted to the king's good pleasure, whether the national archives should be searched, in order to discover the original of that decree. The records were consulted, and the deed found to be authentic. Darius immediately enforced the commission by Cyrus, adding ample encouragements to the builders, and denouncing on their enemies grievous pains and penalties. The Jews continued to build, and the house was finished in the sixth year of that reign. This is the sum of what is recorded in the canonical Book of Ezra, concerning the work of the second Temple.

Temple. Before its dedication the rebuilding of the city was not begun.

ON this principle it is presumed, that the Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes, mentioned in the sixth and seventh verses of the fourth chapter, were not the *predecessors*, but the *successors* of Darius Hystaspis; and consequently were Xerxes and his son, Artaxerxes Longimanus.

“ In the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they * an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.” The articles of this accusation are not expressed. They could not, however, relate to the restoration of the Temple, for that structure had been finished full 30 years before the accession of Xerxes. Of that complaint the subject, doubtless, was the rebuilding of the city: and this conjecture the words of the text confirm. In the preceding verses, which treat of the Temple only, the people of Judah alone are mentioned. The city did not then exist otherwise than as a heap of ruins. Now, after the lapse of 30 years, considerable progress must, under the patronage of Darius, have been made in rearing up its desolate edifices. Not without peculiar emphasis does the historian observe, “ That this accusation was written against the INHABITANTS of JUDAH and JERUSALEM.”

THE history gives no fuller account of the result of this remonstrance, than of its contents, though they are inferred by implication. It had very probably an effect,

* The people of the land, and their counsellors.

similar to the complaint preferred in the former reign. It was meant for mischief, but productive of good. It is the remark of Josephus, "That Xerxes inherited not only the kingdom, but also the piety, of his father Darius; for he did all things relative to the divine worship, in imitation of so worthy a pattern, and approved himself a munificent benefactor of the Jews*." Here is a fortuitous, but not indecisive presumption, that this writer considered Xerxes as the Ahasuerus in Ezra, iv. 6.

"IN the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, &c. a letter against Jerusalem." This remonstrance is explicitly declared to have had for its subject the building of the rebellious and bad city, the walls of which had then been set up, and the foundations joined. During the space of 41 years from the dedication of the Temple, had the Jews, enabled by a royal grant from Darius, and continued by Xerxes, of all the tribute arising from the lands in Judah, Samaria, and Galilee, proceeded with all dispatch, without much disturbance from their schismatical neighbours†. The Samaritans, grudging so large a contribution, extorted annually for the emo-

* Ant. xi. 5. 1.

† The words of the grant are, "Moreover, I make a decree, that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expences be given unto these men that they be not hindered." Ezra, vi. 3. By "*the tribute beyond the river,*" is not meant the whole taxes arising from all the provinces of the Persian empire, on the west of the Euphrates; but, in a more restricted sense, the produce of the revenues imposed on the late kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

lument

lument of the Jews, repeated their grievances, with petitions of relief, at the commencement of every new reign ; and at the accession of Artaxerxes Longimanus, the usual expedient was not omitted. He, implicitly believing the accusation, in its full extent, as set forth, without hearing the Jews in their own defence, gave orders that the city should not be builded, till a new commandment should be given from himself *. The commissioners returned, and made the Jews to cease by force and power ; nor was this peremptory prohibition reversed before the seventh year of the same reign †.

2. THE computation of the Annals deviates from the truth of history, in affirming, that Darius Hystaspis was the prince, who, under the name of Ahafucrus, divorced Vashti and espoused Esther. On the authority of the Septuagint, Josephus, and the apocryphal book

* Ezra, iv. 24.

† This arrangement of reigns, events, and dates, from the first of Cyrus, is authorised by the testimony of the Pagan writers, and, with the help of a few necessary transpositions, accords in perfect harmony with the reports contained in the books of the canonical and apocryphal Ezra.

This order of times, and incidents, does not incur the censure of novelty ; though even novelty is not a certain criterion of error. It rests on the authority of the great Sir Isaac Newton, (Chronol. ch. vi.) and is confirmed by additional remarks and evidences, in a brief essay on the Chronology of some Passages, &c. subjoined to Dr. Wall's Critical Notes on the New Testament, vol. iii. The author of this Analysis would have been happy in referring to authorities equally respectable in support of many other conjectures, for which he alone is responsible.

of Esther;—all which records testify, that the king, whose queen was Esther, and whose prime minister was Haman, had the name of Artaxerxes *. On their authority, Lee, Prideaux, Whiston, &c. dissent from the Primate's hypothesis, which anticipates the history of the canonical book by 59 years.

THE contents of the first two chapters of the Hebrew Esther are a proper introduction to the seventh of the Hebrew Ezra, which history ends with the seventh year of Artaxerxes. The remaining part of Esther continues the history to the 13th of the same reign; and the book of Nehemiah opens with the 20th.

3. BY the consent of all historians Xerxes reigned 21 years, and Artaxerxes, after his father's demise, 41. But in the Annals, 12 years only are counted to the father, and the nine subsequent years to the son; and the reign of the latter extended to 51. This distribution is arbitrary, and repugnant to history and the course of nature.

BY curtailing the reign and life of Xerxes, contrary to the testimony of all the historians, (except Thucydides), and to Ptolemy's Canon, which rests on the firm basis of astronomical calculations, the Archbishop gives his own singular hypothesis every semblance of a paradox. It is likewise incompatible with physical probability. For Justin reports †, that Artaxerxes was,

* Josephus in particular asserts, that he was the son of Xerxes, and therefore could be no other than Artaxerxes Longimanus.

† L. iii. 1.

at the time of his father's death, a very young man, *admodum puer*; and Diodorus Siculus * repeats the same fact. He was born after his father came to the throne, for which reason his elder brothers were overlooked in the succession. Now, if the father reigned but 12 years, the son's age did not exceed 11. But at the time of the father's death, or very soon after, the son was married, and in the third year of his reign divorced his queen. Whereas Xerxes reigned 21 years, Artaxerxes ascended the throne at the age of 20. Thus the course of nature accords with history: the chronology of the Annals offers violence to both, and incurs the censure of absurdity.

No less controvertible is the authority of the Archbishop's postulate, than the conclusion he meant to establish. According to Thucydides the flight of Themistocles into Persia was immediately subsequent to the death of Xerxes †. Usher, in confirmation of his hypothesis, refers to the Chronicle of Eusebius, where the last year of the 76th Olympiad is said to have been the date of Themistocle's expedition into Persia. That however was the 13th of Xerxes. Diodorus Siculus brings it down to the 15th of the same reign. Xerxes

* L. xi.

† It is above suggested, that this author's testimony, as singular, is of doubtful credit. Cornelius Nepos, indeed, quotes it with approbation, though he owns that the far greater number of writers assigns an earlier date; and Plutarch relates, that Charon of Lampfacus agreed in opinion with Thucydides, though he rejects the authority of both.

therefore reigned more than twelve years; and whatever number, less than 21, be assumed, the objection, arising from the premature age of Artaxerxes, remains in full force. Dodwell, in his *Annals of Thucydides*, reprobates, as unchronological, the computation of his author, with respect to the arrival of Themistocles in Persia.

4. USHER's primary object, in this anticipated date of Artaxerxes's reign, was to give his scheme of the 70 prophetic weeks the semblance of historical accuracy. Suppose with him, that Artaxerxes ascended the throne of Persia in the 13th year from his father's accession, his 20th will coincide, in part, with the number of the Jul. Period 4260, the first of the 490 prophetic years. Of these two numbers the sum is 4750, or the fourth from the crucifixion, which was certainly the last of the 490. But if the real 20th of that reign were the true commencement of the prophetic term, the Messiah was cut off 13 years before its termination. On the whole, the arrangement of the *Annals*, in this instance, is a fallacious artifice of chronological empiricism. Let 41 years only be allowed for the reign of Artaxerxes, including the odd months of Artabanus, the younger Xerxes, and Sogdian;—and let 21 years full be allowed for the elder Xerxes, conformably to the unanimous reports of all the historians;—then from the date of Ezra's commission, on the first of Nisan, in the seventh of the same Artaxerxes, A. P. Jul. 4256, the interval thence to the third of Nisan 4746, is precisely 490 years 3 days.

5. As

5. As all the sabbatical years, and jubiles, historically recorded in Josephus, and the books of the Maccabees, are computed from the date of their restoration by Nehemiah *, in the 21st of Artaxerxes; every inquisitive reader, who would peruse the sacred history with discernment, has a right to be informed, whether Nehemiah observed the terms of the original institution, or introduced a new reckoning: if the latter, which of the two is the computation in the Annals?

FOR example: “When Herod and Sosius conducted the siege of Jerusalem, the inhabitants were reduced to extreme necessity from famine, that being a sabbatical year †.” The Jewish historian defines the time by two notations of infallible certainty: 1. The consulate of Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus, and the 185th Olympiad;—the former being the 717th year of the Varroian computation, A. M. 3972; and the first of the latter, coincident, about the time of the summer solstice, that very season, when the city was taken by storm. But that year, as a return of septenary rest, began with the time of the autumnal equinox in 3971. It is now enquired,

1. WHETHER Josephus computed that rest from its true date, the seventh year from the partition of the country in 2568? Compendious and decisive is this problem: for $3971 - 2568 = 1403$, which surplus, divided by 7, quotes 200 years of release, and the remainder denotes the third year of the then current

* Chap. x. 31.

† Josephus, Ant. xiv. 16. 1.

cycle. Evident it therefore is, that Josephus did not count from the primary source. Neither did the Archbishop, whose reckoning, from the seventh year after the passage over Jordan, excludes those six years of sowing and reaping, which the statute did not only permit, but enjoin. By this prochronism, one superfluous week of years is entered into the Annals. With every semblance of precision, however, the year of the siege is characterised as sabbatical. His original numbers, erroneously combined, imposed on himself, and his readers, a plausible chronological deception, in every subsequent criterion of time. By bringing the date of the Creation too low by four years, the numerical characters of this siege, with respect to the age of the world, are misplaced, 3967 being substituted for 3971; as in fixing the time of the first septenary cycle, 2560 was preferred to 2568. This involuntary fallacy wears every aspect of certainty. As it arises from the junction of incoherent numbers, let the four deficient years, in the age of the world, be replaced, ($3967 + 4 = 3971$), and retain the Primate's date of the primary sabbatical year; an easy arithmetical operation will ascertain the source of the mistake. Thus $3971 - 2560 = 1411$, quotes 201 sabbatical cycles, with a surplus of four years, a fractional part of the current cycle, at the time when Herod besieged Jerusalem. The only remaining error is the addition of one superfluous week of years; and this is rectified by substituting 2568 for 2560. *Tantum series juncturaque pollet* †. The next enquiry is,

† Hor.

2. WHETHER

2. WHETHER all the sabbatical cycles subsequent to the re-establishment of the ordinance by Nehemiah, do proceed in a continuous series from this new term? It is previously requisite to ascertain the date of their restoration. One indispensable criterion of time is the accession of Artaxerxes Longimanus; and it has been shewn, that the hypothesis of Usher is exploded by the course of nature, and direct historical evidence. This reign must consequently be reckoned from the 21st of Xerxes, exclusively. Sir Isaac Newton, by an accumulation of chronological characters, fixes his demise to the end of winter A. M. 3544; suppose about the end of January. His murderer, Artabanus, having invaded the vacant throne, was slain after an usurpation of seven months. Thus is the commencement of Artaxerxes' reign brought down to September in that year. HENCE (that is, neither from the Hebrew ABIB, nor the Egyptian THOTH) do the sacred historians compute the succeeding years of this prince. For in the ninth Hebrew month, Chisleu, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes, Nehemiah was informed that the wall of Jerusalem had been broken down, and the gates burnt. Nisan, the first of the next Hebrew year, is characterised as in the 20th of the same reign. From these * and other unequivocal notations, Sir Isaac concludes, with his usual acuteness, that it began in the autumnal half year, between the fourth and ninth Hebrew months. But a chronological character, still more apposite and decisive, remains. Africanus informs us, that the 20th

* See Neh. i. 1. and ii. 1.

of Artaxerxes fell in with the fourth of the 83d Olympiad; and, therefore, his first year began a month or two months before the autumnal equinox*. The Olympic years were computed from the new moon before the summer solstice: consequently his 21st year commenced one month or two before the ensuing autumnal equinox.

THESE dates, thus defined, are happily subservient to the required discovery. In the 20th of Artaxerxes Nehemiah set out from Shushan, in Persia, for Jerusalem: and, in the 25th day of the 6th Hebrew month, Elul, was the city wall finished. The 21st of Artaxerxes was then begun. On the 15th of the seventh month was the feast of tabernacles observed with extraordinary solemnity. On the 24th was held a voluntary fast, spent in the reading of the law, in the confession of sins, and in framing the articles of a national reformation. One of these was an obligation formally ratified to "leave every seventh year, and the exaction of every debt." This is a new source of computation by the sabbatical cycles, commencing with the autumnal equinox A. M. 3565. It has been remarked, that the year in which Herod took Jerusalem, 3971, was sabbatical. If the less sum be taken from the greater, and the difference, 406, divided by seven, the result will be 58 septenary rests for the land, and release for servants. As (00) remains, that year was sabbatical, in virtue of the new regulation, in the 21st of Artaxerxes. But by the primitive term in the days

* Newton's Chronology, p. 354.

of Joshua, Jerusalem was besieged in the third year of a then current cycle.

IT may asked, Why did Nehemiah deviate from the original series? It may be replied, that the true times of observing these periodical solemnities might have escaped the remembrance of that generation, after a lapse of 654 years, since the days of Samuel; for so long had years of rest and release gone into disuse.

BUT another reason is much more probable, and almost certain. Fourteen years, precisely, before this new regulation, had the 70 weeks of years begun. That every septenary combination might be signalized by the re-establishment of a sacred ordinance, too long neglected, and eminently conducive to the practice of national justice, mercy, and devotion, Nehemiah connected the sabbatical years with a famous circulating period in the oracles of prophecy. This double series of regulating measures, in computation, is decisive, if applied to the chronology of our Lord;—more particularly it defines, with infallible certainty, the duration of his ministry.

AT the commencement of the 30th jubile, from the days of Joshua, was he baptised about the time of the autumnal equinox: and at the end of the 70th week, which, by the regulations of Nehemiah was sabbatical, did he suffer on the cross, at the very time foretold by Daniel.

WERE it not for the injudicious expedient, to which the very respectable Metropolitan had recourse for correcting the well-known metachronism in the year of

the Dionysian era ; and the improper disposition of those chronological numbers, on which depends the truth of computation ; together with the fallacious dates, assigned to the sabbatical cycles originally defined by Moses, and at a very remote period, altered, with exquisite propriety, by Nehemiah ;—were it not for such egregious oversights, in the plan and execution of the ANNALS ;—the chronology of our Lord's life would have been the most intelligible, coherent, and perspicuous article, in the whole history of the Bible. But, as set forth to view in this otherwise masterly work of a first-rate genius, the subject is enveloped in darkness impenetrable ; and, on his principles, it never can acquire the attribute of credibility *.

IT

* In favour of the later writers on the HARMONY of the GOSPELS, it has liberally been observed, that they come nearer to the perfection of a just arrangement, than their predecessors could attain. To this praise the later CHRONOLOGERS have no claim. Not suspecting confusion or fallacy in the notations of Archbishop Usher ; to reconcile his scheme with itself, with the computations recorded in the history and prophecies of the Old Testament, and with the correspondent characters of time in the writings of the Evangelists ; they have laboured to extract light from obscurity, and order from confusion ; but without effect ; for the later writers on the chronology of the gospels exceed their predecessors in the absurdity of their determinations. Dr. Prideaux's scheme, which makes the 70th of Daniel's weeks coincident, and commensurate, with the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, is perfectly exact. One single criterion of time would have prevented the very possibility of all future mistakes. It required but a very moderate degree of precaution to suggest, that

IT has been evinced that Usher misplaces the dates of the sabbatical years, both from the time of Joshua, and of Nehemiah ; as also of the 70 prophetic weeks. Terms, so essential to the truth of reckoning, ought to be fixed with the utmost precision. Sir Isaac Newton, and other learned masters in sacred literature, having mistaken the series of septenary cycles, restored by Nehemiah, for that originally instituted by Moses *, it is requisite to exemplify computation from both epochs. Few are the explicit allusions, in the Hebrew scriptures, to the primitive series. Of these, three are selected.

1. " THIS shall be a sign unto thee" (Hezekiah) ;
" ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves,
and in the second year that which spring of the same ;

that this 70th week began in the Hebrew month Abib, A. M. 4034, not 4029, (as in the Annals), and ended in the same month, A. M. 4041, not 4036. The absence of such precaution left a subject, formerly perplexed, still doubtful. Dr. Macnight adjusts, with tolerable exactness, the chronology of Christ's ministry to the history of that period, but, in some cases, proceeds with hesitation, in others without consistency, and, at last, concludes with an approach to certainty.

Some of his successors, in this line of investigation, have deviated widely, not only from truth, but even from probability. Bishops Pearce, Newcome, and Dr. Priestly, have presented their several hypotheses to the public, without imparting to their readers one spark of illumination.

* See Sir I. Newton's Observations on the Prophecies, p. 131, and other passages of that rather ingenious than accurate work.

and

and in the third year sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits *.”

FROM the 13th verse of the 18th chapter it is evident, that, in the 14th of Hezekiah, Sennacherib came up against all the cities of Judah, and, no doubt, laid the country under exorbitant contributions, for the support of his numerous army. It is not here enquired, whether that was actually observed as a sabbatical year, for the reverse is certain ; but whether it was such in rotation? The years of Hezekiah began with Abib, those of rest from tillage with Tizri. Computation must, therefore, proceed from the 13th of that reign, A. M. 3382. Hence subtract that year, which is the source of computation, 2568 ; the surplus, 814, which, divided by seven, quotes 116 years of rest for the land, and leaves two for the fractional part of a 117th cycle. That year, consequently, was not sabbatical by rotation. But God gave, for a signal to support the faith of Hezekiah, and his people, a gracious promise of an extraordinary supply, from the spontaneous fruits of the earth.

* 2 Kings, xix. 29.

* Without entering into a minute explication, how the produce of one year should suffice for three, be it remembered, that the Hebrew year had a double commencement, the CIVIL from the autumnal equinox, the SACRED from the opposite cardinal point. Both commencements are here specified, and either interval reckoned for a full year. The Israelites had the promise of immutable veracity, that the increase of every sixth year should be adequate to the consumption of 18 months.

2. IN

2. IN the eighth year of Zedekiah, A. M. 3418, when the sovereign had made a covenant with all the people, that every man should proclaim liberty to his male and female servants; and, even after an actual dismissal, the princes recalled them into servitude, in the prospect of aid from the king of Egypt against Nebuchadnezzar, a prophet was sent to denounce the unavoidable captivity of Zedekiah, and the desolation of the city *. It is enquired, was that year sabbatical? Answer, It was the third after the past, and the fourth before the next septenary release. Though neither of the specified years concluded a cycle, the operations shew the times of the circulating repetitions.

3. IN the fourth of Joiakim began the 70 years captivity of Judah: "To fulfil the word of the Lord, by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate, she kept sabbath, to fulfil three score and ten years †."

HENCE it is certain, that 70 returns of years, sacred to rest and release, with the remission of debts, and the recovery of estates, prior to the fourth of Joiakim, had been successively neglected. The years of sowing and reaping, corresponding to 70 sabbaths of years, are 420: and $420 + 70 = 490$. From the second of that reign, A. M. 3401, which was sabbatical, deduct 490, the difference, 2911, fixes the first continual omission of those pious solemnities to the first of Saul.

IT remains to be shewn, that all the sabbatical years, of which mention occurs in history, posterior to their

* Jer. xxxiv. 8—22.

† 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.

restoration

restoration by Nchemiah, were computed by the new series.

It is not certain, whether the lands enjoyed a pause from cultivation, during the 21st of Artaxerxes. Every probability lies on the other side. The people (not having that article of reform in contemplation, before the reading of the law, on the several days while they were solemnizing the feast of tabernacles, in that very year and month, when that covenant of reformation was ratified) might not be provided with the means of returning the money due upon mortgaged inheritances. This circumstance, alone, might induce the princes of tribes to defer the sabbatical solemnity, till six seasons of sowing and reaping should elapse. This permission was granted, after the partition of the land ; and after the re-establishment of all these ordinances, the like indulgence might be expedient and necessary. But this concession, though admitted, does not affect the argument. For if the 28th of Artaxerxes were the first actual year of rest, release, and redemption of hereditary property, yet still the 21st is the true source of computation.

ANOTHER preliminary remark, it is proper to suggest. The septenary cycles were never, perhaps, more regularly observed in the days of the Judges, than in the times subsequent to the administration of Nehemiah. Ordinances so inseparably connected with humanity, justice, religion, and secular interest, would, on this last account alone, though all the other motives had a less powerful influence, be most punctually observed.

That

That people was no sooner subject to a foreign yoke than put under tribute. In a state of unavoidable dependence, exemption from the taxes of the seventh year, the Jews always implored, and, for any thing now known, it was ever granted, as an equitable indulgence. A few instances, in the chronological order, are subjoined.

	A. M.
Sabbatical cycles restored, 21st Artaxerxes	3565
First rest for the land, and release of servants	7 3572
Alexander remitted the tribute of the seventh year, Josephus, Ant. xi. 8. 5.	} 105 3677
Bethsura surrendered for want of store in the seventh year, 1 Maccab. vi. 49. Ant. xii. 95.	} 168 3845
Siege of Beth Dagon continued to the year of rest, Ant. xiii. 8. 1. War. i. 1. 14.	} 28 3872
In a famine of the seventh year Herod took Jerusalem, Ant. xiv. 16. 2. & xv. 1. 2.	} 98 3971
A famine in the seventh year, because the seed of the foregoing season perished in the soil, Ant. xv. 16. 1.	} 14 3985
Year of the crucifixion	- - 56 4041

THESE computations, constructed on true chronological principles, give to the postulates, above assumed, all the certainty of infallible self evident axioms. As such they are here repeated.

1. ARCHBISHOP Usher unhappily antedated the septenary cycles, in either series, the one by seven, the other by nine years, which entirely defeats the suberviency of both to historical arrangement.

2. By

2. By a rash, unjustifiable abbreviation of one reign, and the proportional enlargement of another, historical order is violated in favour of a hypothesis, visionary, fallacious, and repugnant to the evidence of every authentic record. This artful and arbitrary transposition of numbers brings the beginning of the famous 70 weeks nine years lower than their true epoch; and this sum protracts the currency of these weeks as much beyond that point in historical time, where, by every fair mode of reckoning, they ought to end. If four years taken from the date of the creation be restored, the metachronism will amount to 17 years. The result disjoins the natural connection which subsists between the oracles of prophecy and the report of history. From different terms may this memorable prophetic period be computed, in the descending series. But with the crucifixion it must end. Allow 21 years for the reign of Xerxes, and 41 for that of his son, Longimanus, the artificial confusion in the Annals, for this period, disappears, and every obstruction to a just arrangement in the ascending series is removed. Easy and certain is the operation. From 4041 deduct 490, the remainder, 3551, denotes the seventh of Artaxerxes, as before.

3. SIR Isaac Newton and others, taking it for granted that the sabbatical years of Nehemiah were a continuation of the series begun by Joshua, have inadvertently combined two eminent chronological characters, which if kept distinct, (as every historical criterion of those times requires), would have been sufficient
either

either to prevent or correct mistakes in the chronology of our Lord's life and ministry. Usher had involved the subject in such perplexity and confusion as to defeat the primary uses and ends of all the septenary periods, whether measured by weeks of days, or of years. Sir Isaac Newton, at a venture, assumed the postulate, that a sabbatical year characterised that of the crucifixion, without the least apprehension, that such years were computed from two different sources.

THE 70 weeks of Daniel begin and end in Abib, or Nisan, of the sacred Hebrew year. This criterion is common to each part of the entire number, and consequently to the 70th or last week. The prophet had no retrospect to the original ordinance concerning periodical rests for the land, release for bond servants, remission of debts, &c. ;—usages which had become obsolete almost six centuries before his time. Nothing less. Of his commission it was the ultimate object to define, by certain notes of number, a point in remote futurity, when a notable personage, often foretold by former prophets, and then first denominated THE MESSIAH, *should be cut off, but not for himself*, as the signal of a momentous revolution soon after to succeed.

NATURAL it is to conjecture, that a prediction of events, so grand and awful, would rouse the attention of every inquisitive mind, to unfold the mystical terms in which it was delivered, and, if possible to ascertain the time of its completion.

FROM the first year of Darius the Mede, A. M. 3471, when this prophecy was emitted, to the seventh of Longimanus,

Longimanus, in 3551, when the first of the 70 weeks began, is an interval of 80 years. From the month Abib, in the year last mentioned, count forward $13\frac{1}{2}$ years, the reckoning is continued to Tizri, in the 21st of the same Longimanus;—that very month, when Nehemiah, with the concurrence of the princes, priests, Levites, and the collective body of the people, entered into a curse, and into an oath, that they would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt*. Thus is the coincidence of the last year of the second prophetical week, with the first sabbatical year, in the series from Nehemiah, demonstrated. It has been already shewn, that every sabbatical year, in the original series, falls in the center of a prophetical week from the date of Ezra's commission. According to this rule the seventh of the original series must likewise be the fourth of the 70th week, from the 21st of Artaxerxes. In the first year of this week John the Baptist began his ministry, in the month Abib, A.M. 4034. Add $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, the reckoning terminates in Tizri 4038. About the time of the ~~vernal~~ equinox Jesus was baptised, and soon after opened his commission to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, in the synagogue at Nazareth. Prolong the computation downward, from that cardinal point, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years more, the crucifixion is fixed by infallible chronological characters to the beginning of Abib, 4041: the latter part of which year was, by the new series, sabbatical.

* Neh. x. 29—31.

autumnal

To

TO prevent the censure of audacious presumption, in controverting the authority, not only of archbishop Usher, but of Sir Isaac Newton, and of still more recent writers, eminent in the republic of letters, the author judged it necessary to elucidate the chronology and history of our Lord's ministry, and that of his forerunner, by evidences derived from genuine records. The result is, that the last prophetic week, divided into two equal portions, comprehends and exhausts the duration of both, in exact harmony with the prophecies of Daniel, the testimony of the Evangelists, and the repetitions of the three famous septenary cycles, that of natural days from the creation, of astronomical years from the division of Canaan, and also from the 21st of Artaxerxes, rightly computed. To ascertain the true sources of these circulating periods, has been a work of labour and patience. But no merit is claimed from the discovery. That the ministry of John the Baptist, and of Jesus Christ, was circumscribed within the limits of seven years, has, from time immemorial, been the uniform belief of plain unlettered Christians, and of the learned before the reception of an erroneous chronology, which the accurate arrangements of Dr. Prideaux have not been sufficient to explode. The subject is now brought to the test of strict calculation, and submitted to the tribunal of impartial criticism.

FROM Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Joseph Priestly, a great majority of the writers, on the chronology of the Evangelists, has incurred the imputation of adopt-

ing ambiguous principles, and of resting in absurd conclusions *. They generally compute by the Dionysian era, and the Catonian years of Rome; and so compress, within too scanty limits, the interval from our Lord's nativity to his passion. Thus the ministry, either of Christ or of John, or of both, is, without necessity, and contrary to historical evidence, abridged. But if seven years be allowed for both, and this period brought down to April A. M. 4041, coincident with the number of the Jul. Per. 4746, every difficulty is surmounted, consistently with every criterion of time.

* An eminent commentator on the Gospels, contemporary with both and inferior to neither in Biblical criticism, Dr. Pearce, late bishop of Rochester, incurs this censure of adopting contracted epochs, and deficient measures. Dodwell had framed the Chronology of Vell. Paternus to an agreement with Varro's Computation, which makes the first Julian year run parallel with 709, and the 78th with 786. The Right Reverend Critic, with a rash, unskilful hand, accommodated the Chronology of Josephus and Paternus to the Catonian scheme, which retrenches two years from the Varronian. According to him Christ was born in the 41st Julian year, and suffered in the 74th;—not as the truth of computation requires;—in the 40th and 77th.—Thus is the first, and consequently the 15th of Tiberius, anticipated by two years; the crucifixion by no less than five: and the result is, that the 70th and last prophetic week began with the month Abib, about the middle of which the Messiah was cut off. Thus, in effect, the ministry both of Christ and his forerunner is anticipated, the clear interpretation of a very coherent prophecy distorted, the whole computation by sabbatical terms set aside, and the most consistent history ever written by the pen of man, involved in a deep gloom of artificial darkness.

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

Chronology of the Greek Empire.

THIS monarchy, founded by Alexander of Macedon, rose into political importance on the ruins of the Persian. He is the mighty king, of whom it had been foretold, (257 years before the event), “that he should stand up, rule with great dominion, and do according to his will*.” The supremacy of Providence is wonderfully displayed, in overruling the wills of princes, and in rendering their enterprises subservient to the accomplishment of its gracious designs, even when the means employed seem to human wisdom inadequate, or of a contrary tendency.

“THIS kingdom is compared to a leopard to signify its fierceness. Its four heads and four wings signify, that it should be divided into four kingdoms; for it continued in a monarchical form, during the reign of Alexander, of his brother Aridæus, and of his young sons, Alexander and Hercules; and then brake into four kingdoms, by the governors of provinces putting crowns on their own heads, reigning over their own provinces;—~~Cassan~~ Cassander over Macedon,

* Dan. xi. 3.

Greece, and Epirus;—Lyfimachus over Thrace and Bithynia;—Ptolemy over Egypt, Arabia, Cæleſyria, and Paleſtine;—and Seleucus over Syria*.”

SHORT was the duration of the monarchy; ſhorter ſtill that of the four kingdoms. Each of the ſelf-created ſovereigns vainly affected to be Alexander; and, not content to preſide over a part of his dominions, ſtrove to acquire the whole. Confederacies, ratified without ſincerity, and ſuſpicions which artifice could not conceal, prompted the antagoniſts to hoſtile meaſures. Hence a collision of contrary forces, fatal to all the parties, of whom none could be ſatisfied with any thing leſs than univerſal dominion. After a ſhort ſpace of about 19 years from the ſubverſion of the Perſian Empire, the reſult of diſcordant counſels, and of arms polluted with the blood of millions, was the formation of two independent principalities: Syria, where Seleucus erected his throne;—and Egypt, of which Ptolemy Soter retained poſſeſſion.

IN the Books of the Maccabees theſe two principalities have one common title, The KINGDOM of the GREEKS: Its name is, from one of the ſovereigns, called the era of the Seleucidæ. By it both theſe authors compute, the one from the 12th, the other from the 13th, after the demife of Alexander †.

* Sir I. Newton on the Prophecies, p. 29.

† Dr. Prideaux explains the reaſon of this variation in reckoning by the era of Seleucus, and exemplifies it in different dates aſſigned by the two authors for the ſame event. See Connex. Ann. 312.

IN the subsequent schemes of historical transactions, with their dates, of coexistent magistracies, and of chronological numbers, it was found, that the page was too narrow to admit the titles of several articles; much less the triple column of numerical notations in reckoning. The years of the Jul. Period, and those before the Dionysian era, are, for these reasons, unavoidably superseded, though they are expressed for the first and last years of each scheme.

Scheme I.

HISTORICAL events from the RISE of the GREEK EMPIRE, A. P. J. 4383. Before A. D. 330, and A. M. 3678.

Alexander dies in the 18th of Jaddua's pontificate	3685
Jaddua dies in the 2d of Philip Aridæus	- 3687
Aridæus dies in the 5th of Onias the H. Priest	3692
Alexander Ægus deposed	- - 3696
Slain, with his mother Roxane, by Cassander	3699
The Pentateuch translated into Greek at Alexandria	3732
Pyrrhus expelled Italy	- - - 3735
Hannibal defeats Flaminius at the Thrasymenus	3792
Scipio conquers Hannibal at Zama	- 3807
Antiochus, the Great, routed at Thermopylæ	3818
Carthage and Corinth desolated by the Romans	3863
Syria becomes a Roman province	- 3944
Pompey takes Jerusalem	- - 3946
Its walls repaired	- - 3965
Herod again takes the city	- - 3972
Egypt a Roman province, and the Greek Em- pire unhinged	} 3978
	THIS

THIS compendious selection of notable incidents, taken promiscuously from the history of the Jews, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Romans, is a specimen of the various materials whence the times of events may be defined by a diversity of national eras. The computation is thus brought down to A. P. J. 4683, or the 30th before the Dionysian era of our Lord's nativity.

OF this third prophetic monarchy Ptolemy's Astronomical Canon furnishes the inquisitive student with an authentic chronicle *. Even Ptolemy's exquisite collection betrays some instances of singularity in reckoning, though they seldom involve error. Alexander Ægus was dethroned in the fourth of his reign, and slain in the seventh ; yet the canon continues his government to the eighth year of the Seleucidan era, and defers to the ninth the accession of Ptolemy Soter, to whom is assigned a reign of 20 years. Evident is the impropriety of extending the duration and honours of royalty, after the term of a sovereign's degradation ; much more, beyond the period of natural life. This over-

* Its best edition in English is that by Prideaux, in his Chronological tables, where the years of Nabonnassar are connected with the numbers of the Julian period. With respect to the names of the kings, the series of succession, and the length of reigns, extremely inaccurate are the arrangements of the Abbé Dufrenoy ; a writer, who has the merit of comprising, in a very narrow compass, an immense repository of erudition in chronological antiquities: This is not the only period which exemplifies his negligence or credulity. But it may seem invidious to censure an individual, in a matter which affects many.

fight

fight is effectually rectified by assigning to Soter a reign of 28 years, commencing from the date of the era.

It has already been observed, that Josephus, the only author whose works, still extant, contain a full history of the Jewish nation, is much more accurate in his account of the high priests since the return from Chaldaea, than in former times. His registers are not always complete, or his notations perfectly exact. In such cases, however, his deficiencies may be supplied, and his mistakes corrected, from genuine sources of information, here and there dispersed in other fragments of sacred antiquity, or in partial catalogues, among the writings of the Christian fathers.

“THE high priests of Josadac’s posterity were 15, under a popular government, during the space of 414 years *.”

As to the number of pontiffs, the author is exact. But the period of their administration did not exceed 370.

IN the same passage, the author enumerates, by name, nine pontiffs from Menelaus to Antigonus, all (except Menelaus) of the Asmonean family. The real number is ten ; but perhaps Alexandra, as a queen, was, on account of her sex, excluded from the priesthood ; for, in this period, the chief magistracy was sometimes united with the sacred character, and sometimes kept distinct.

THE duration of the Asmonean period was about 130 years. Josephus is peculiarly attentive to mark the

* Ant. xx. 10. 1.

years of vacancy in the pontificate, the length of incumbencies, and what high priests retained their dignities for life, were superseded, or held the office as colleagues :—notations of signal use in reckoning which, without the least danger of fallacy, exhibit every desirable criterion of truth. Under the direction of guides, uninspired indeed, yet almost infallible, a candid and docile spirit needs no extraordinary degree, either of sagacity or labour, to combine the several links in this part of the great chronological chain.

THE report of Ptolemy, Josephus, the two writers of the Maccabees, &c. is but human testimony ; but it is testimony strongly confirmed by the evidence both of prophecy and history ;—prophecy emitted, and history written, by divine inspiration. This portion of the sacred chronology is comprehended in the 70 weeks, of which the termination is fixed by an infallible character of time. To this sure word of prophecy, the preachers and disciples of the gospel, at its first publication, giving good heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, acquired the full assurance, that the first coming of Christ, in the manner, and at the time foretold, was then past. Hence the apostle, reasoning with equal light and force of argument, concludes the infallible certainty of his second coming. The particular inference deducible from these principles, and applied to the present subject, is, that if the whole period of the 70 weeks be clearly elucidated by a luminous body of evidence, from the volumes both of prophecy and
and

and history, this one part of the same period can lie under no suspicion of uncertainty or imposture.

Scheme II.

Coexistent magistracies in the GREEK EMPIRE, set in juxtaposition with the princes, kings, and priests, of the JEWS, from the ERA of SELEUCUS.

I. Syria.		II. Egypt.		III. Judah.		A.M.
Seleucus Nicanor	33	Ptolemy Soter	28	Onias I. dies	12	3708
Antiochus Soter	19	Ptol. Philadelphus	38	Simon the Just	21	3717
Ant. Tneus	15			Eleazar	36	3732
Sel. Callinicus	20	Ptol. Euergetes	25	Manasseh	62	3758
Sel. Ceraunus	3	Ptol. Philopator	17	Onias II.	95	3791
Ant. Magnus	36	Ptol. Epiphanes	24	Simon II.	117	3813
Sel. Philopator	11	Ptol. Philometor	35	Onias III.	137	3833
Ant. Epiphanes	11			Jafon	140	3836
Ant. Eupator	2			Menelaus	146	3842
Demetrius Soter	12	Ptol. Physcon	29	Jud. Maccabeus	152	3848
Alex. Balas	5			Jonathan	169	3865
Dem. Nicator	20	Ptol. Lathyrus	36	Simon II.	177	3873
& Ant. Sidetes				J. Hyrcanus	206	3902
Alex. Zebina	2			Aristobulus	207	3903
Ant. Grypus	27	Alexander	15	Alex. Jannæus	234	3930
Seleucus	4	Ptol. Auletes	14	Alexandra	243	3939
Philip	9	Cleopatra	21	Aristobulus	249	3945
Tigranes	18			Hyrcanus	272	3968
				Antigonus	275	3971
				Herod	282	3978
17)247(14 y. 6 m.		11)282(25 y. 7 m.		18)282(15 y.		7 m.

SHOULD this combination of names and numbers appear, at first view, less perspicuous than concise, a few remarks for illustration are subjoined.

1. IN the longer reigns and pontificates, some part, at least, of one prince's prefecture is coexistent with that of the other two; but not always in those of the shortest duration. Such variations are of little moment.

2. THE

2. THE names of the kings in the first and second columns, are expressed nearly about the time of their accession, which is computed, rather from the incumbency of the high priest, mentioned in the same horizontal line, than from the specified year of the world. The column of numbers, annexed to that of the names, denotes the length of reigns.

3. IN the register of the princes, &c. in Judah, the numbers, correspondent to their several names, denote the years of Seleucus, (from the date of that era), coincident with the termination of their respective magistracies, and in connexion with the then current years of the world.

4. THE sum of the reigns in Egypt, 282, being precisely equal to the pontificates, reigns, &c. in Judah, demonstrates the true quantity of the interval from the first of the Seleucidan epoch to the dissolution of the Greek Empire. Though the chronology is derived from different sources, the reports are in unison. The reduction of Syria happened in the 247th of the era, 35 years before the rise of the Roman Empire; $282 - 247 = 35$.

5. THE exact number of the governors, in their separate prefectures, may, without falsifying the registers, be reduced. For example; Demetrius Nicator, after a reign of five years in Syria, was removed, and Antiochus Sidetes set on the throne, who, after an usurpation of ten years, was degraded. Demetrius, being restored, held the sovereignty five years more. The sum of their reigns was 20, as in the scheme.

But

But Sidetes, being excluded, the kings are 17 ; by which number, if 247 be divided, the common measure is 14 years 6 months.

ONIAS III. wore the mitre 24 years ; but was supplanted by Jafon, and he, in his turn, by Menelaus ; for which reason four years are, in the scheme, retrenched from the incumbency of Onias. The first pontiff of this name had been invested with the primacy nine years before the era of Seleucus ; and Herod reigned 27 after the reduction of Egypt. Truth in computation permits, in such cases, the omission either of Onias or Herod. Let him, with the usurper Jafon, be expunged from the register, for this period, 18 successive magistracies remain ; by 18 divide 282, the quotient assigns to each 15 years 7 months.

It is to be noted, that the 11 coexistent reigns in Egypt were, one with another, 25 years 7 months. If this common quantity of separate reigns in Egypt, be compared with that in Syria and Judah, for the same space of time, (nearly so at least), the result may be admitted, as a confirmation of Sir Isaac Newton's postulate, that the common medium of reigns, since the abbreviated duration of natural life, does not much exceed $19\frac{1}{2}$, or 20 years.

*Seventh Age of the World.**From the Battle at Actium to the Demise of Tiberius Nero
Cæsar.*

C H A P. I.

GENERAL REMARKS *on the* CHRONOLOGY *of this*
PERIOD.

TO the 30th year before the Dionysian era have the accounts of times, and the fates of empires, been brought down, from periods unknown, fabulous, and historical, as characterised by the most illuminated SAGES among the GENTILES. Moses, the Prophets, and Evangelists, make no such distinctions. Without the least hesitation, they speak decisively of events in past or future duration, from the full belief that the subjects of their reports were events which had, or most certainly would, come to pass. The sacred writings are a promiscuous collection of prophecies sealed up to the time of their completion, and of histories authenticating, with a wonderful precision of places, times, persons, and other circumstances, their actual accomplishment.

THIS seventh age of historical time was, in many respects, much more remarkable than all those before

or

or since. In no period was a more numerous train of very important oracles fulfilled; and no former age, at least, produced more accomplished historians to transmit (many of them without explicit knowledge of providential predetermination) the stupendous events which these oracles had presignified.

It is here noted, without censure, that Usher, and most, if not all, former Chronologers, date this Seventh age from the vulgar year of our Lord's nativity. But may it not, with equal propriety, be computed from the origin of the Roman empire, which was coeval with the introduction of the gospel economy, and so characterised in the prophetical volumes? "I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible;—diverse from all the other beasts;—and behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days;—and there was given him dominion and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion," &c. * With no mean apparatus of prophetical imagery are the former empires described, prior to their existence, in a kind of orderly procession, and distinguished by their peculiar attributes. This fourth is exhibited as an object of grandeur and terror, awful in itself as a whole, multitudinous in its parts, and diverse from all kingdoms. With these characteristics is contrasted, in the spirit of true sublimity, a co-existent dominion, supreme, boundless, everlasting. No signs concomi-

* Dan. vii. 7—14.

tant, similar, and of equal magnificence, are specified in the records of prophecy and history, at the rise of any preceding empire.

OCTAVIUS CESAR, and Jesus of Nazareth, were contemporary, and born within the limits of the Roman dominions. Before the birth of either, Syria had been added to the then extensive conquests of that enterprising people (a nation of heroes); and Palestine though under the jurisdiction of a nominal and vicarious king, was an appendage of the Syrian prefecture. Both these personages founded a kingdom, with each of which has been connected the criterion of universality. About the time of their nativity very sanguine, and very general expectations prevailed of some one mighty potentate shortly to appear, whose dominion should be wide as the universe. Whether these expectations rose from immemorial tradition, or from the Greek version of the Hebrew prophecies, which, for almost three centuries before, had been circulated wherever that language was understood, is uncertain. One circumstance, however, must not be omitted. These personages were no sooner born, than the character of universal monarch was applied to both.

“ THE day Augustus was born, while the senate was warmly debating the subject of Cataline’s plot, his father Octavius, on account of the state of his family, came into the court at a late hour. It is a notorious fact, that P. Nigidius, having learned the reason of the delay, and the hour of the young prince’s nativity, declared, that

that the world had now got a new sovereign.”—
 “Jul. Marathus relates, that a few months before his birth, a strange incident, at Rome, presaged, that nature was then about to bring forth a king for the Roman people. Alarmed with the apprehension of restored monarchy, the senate passed a decree, that no man-child, born that year, should be preserved. Those members, who suspected that this sanguinary resolution might affect their own families, prevented its registration in the treasury, without which form it could not acquire the force of a law †.”

THESE quotations are not produced to confirm the veracity of the astrologers. They, however, authenticate the opinions every where entertained in that age. The Romans and Jews considered the phrases *Terrarum orbis*, and *Πᾶσα ἡ οἰκουμένη*, as equivalent to the whole habitable world.

THAT the like expectations, at the same time, were impatiently cherished among the Jews and Samaritans,

† Quo natus est die, cum de Catalinæ conjuratione ageretur in curiâ, et Octavius ob uxoris puerperium serius adfuisset, nota ac vulgata res est, P. Nigidium compertâ moræ causâ, ut horam quoque partûs acceperit, adfirmasse, DOMINUM terrarum orbi natum. — *Et paulo superius*; — Auctor est Jul. Marathus, ante paucos menses quam nasceretur, prodigium factum Romæ publicè, quo denunciabatur regem populo Romano naturam parturire: senatum exterritum censuisse nequis anno illo genitus educaretur: eos, qui gravidas uxores haberent, quo ad se quisque spem traheret, curasse ne S. C. ad ærarium deferretur. Suet. August. cap. 94.

is evident, from the surface of almost every page of the four gospels. Nay, certain sages, instructed either by tradition, or the sacred oracles, in the faith of a saviour for mankind at large, were, at length, conducted by a supernatural impulse, and an extraordinary meteor, from a remote country in the east to Jerusalem; where, enquiring the name of the place which should give birth to the king of the Jews? the answer given, in a convention of the priests or scribes of the people, was BETHLEHEM of Judea.

HEROD, an alien, who had derived the sovereignty from a foreign power, and, afraid of losing it, on account of many tyrannical encroachments on the liberties of the people, was vehemently troubled at the report. Stung with suspicion, jealousy, rage, and terror, he commanded an immediate massacre of all the male children in or about the vicinity of Bethlehem, from two years old and under. But, by the protection of ever wakeful Providence, Jesus was previously removed into Egypt.

THE gospel was first published within the limits of the Roman empire, then extending from Scythia to Numidia, and from the eastern boundary of Asia to the coasts of the Atlantic. Several centuries, under persecution from infidels of every class, had elapsed, before the Christians obtained a civil establishment. Rome then claimed first the prerogatives of a mother church, next of supremacy, afterwards of universality, lastly of infallibility. In process of time primitive truth was debased with heresies, a pure worship with idolatry and
superstition,

superstition, salutary discipline with absurd penances and civil authority was converted into an engine of destruction. In all these enormous corruptions is Rome Antichristian a genuine type of Rome Pagan.

IN the Augustan age, or the fulness of time, God sent forth his Son, invested with a human character, and a special commission to break down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile, and slay their mutual enmity ; not to mention many other purposes of essential goodness. What if it should be evinced, that the Augustan age was likewise the fitness of time ; nay even the fittest of all from the creation to the now expiring century.

1. The Roman Government had lately acquired a new form.

ITS primitive constitution, under seven sovereigns, was regal ; under annual consuls, republican ; under tribunes of the army and of the commons, and other occasional magistracies, partly popular and partly aristocratical. Last of all, it was an empire or monarchy, under one supreme ruler, invested with all the prerogatives of royalty, though without the title. This form of administration, as characterised in prophecy, restricts its commencement either to its first, or to its last period. The first cannot be the prophetic term. For one indispensable criterion of its essence is neither priority of order, nor co-existence, but succession to the other three. The first series of kings from Romulus

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began about 148 years before the Babylonian empire. This arrangement is therefore an egregious prochronism.

FOR the like reasons is the republican system, in all its modifications, exploded. It was almost coeval with the Persian monarchy, and commensurate with that of Greece. The republican form is specifically different from the regal or imperial ; and it is expressly affirmed, that identity of character should be an attribute common to all the four kingdoms, yet, admitting such marks of diversity as discriminate individuals of the same species. The last did actually commence immediately after the third had lost its political existence ;—and it is added, immediately after it had acquired its true prophetic character, by emerging from its republican form.

2. *A reformed CALENDAR was necessary for the Truth of COMPUTATION.*

THE primitive year, as regulated by Romulus, was deficient in quantity, and inartificial in form. It was improved by his successor, Numa ; but not on strict astronomical principles. Julius Cæsar, in the Varroian year 708, and the 45th before A. D. 1, by the advice of Sosigenes, an eminent Egyptian astronomer, reformed the national calendar, and procured its introduction over the whole empire. As exquisitely framed for popular use, the Julian year soon became the model in computation ; and has, by immemorial prescription, been generally adopted in Europe. It exceeds the natural year by a few excrescent-fractional parts, which,
being

being a well known quantity, have been, and may be, without limitation of future time, reduced to the standard of nature, by periodical equations *.

IN the ANNALS of the Old and New Testament, have the chronology and history of no prior age been involved in a deeper gloom of artificial obscurity, than the short period of Christ's life and ministry. The most reverend author, it must be acknowledged, was in part misled, even by the most renowned historians of the Augustan and subsequent age; and it may be considered as a paradox, were it affirmed, that palpable chronological mistakes in Livy, Paternulus, Suetonius, &c. can be rectified no otherwise, than by indubitable characters of time in the Evangelist Luke. Such are, for instance, the date of the enrolment before the demise of Herod;—of the *actual* taxation under Cyrenius;—the 15th of Tiberius, compared with the commencement of the 70th prophetic week;—the age of Jesus in the first of John's ministry. With all these notations full in his view, the primate seems to have put a veil before his face, and thrown an impenetrable shade of darkness over some of the most luminous parts of the gospel history. Nor of it alone; for, by an arbitrary transposition of historical events, and a strange confusion of dates, the sabbatical cycles, prophetic periods, and national æras, are either rendered

* Of the Julian year, with respect to form, quantity, and mechanism, a more minute account is reserved for THE PRINCIPLES OF COMPUTATION, under the article, CIVIL YEAR.

useless, or acquire the character of fallacious guides, in the art of computation.

How are these anachronisms in the Roman histories, and in the venerable AUTHOR of the ANNALS, to be corrected? By two infallible dates :—the reformation of the Roman calendar ;—and the demise of Tiberius Nero.

BUT can the quantity of this interval be ascertained? With the utmost ease. As each term is fixed by characters of equal certainty, it is a matter of pure indifference whether the intermediate years be computed in the retrograde or progressive line. Various and decisive are the chronological measures applicable to this short and memorable period. Two are selected, in perfect agreement with all the rest ;—the Jul. Per. and the years of the Varronian epoch of Rome.

TIBERIUS Nero died A. P. J. 4747, coincident with U. C. 787. on the 16th March ; and in the second Julian year, on the 15th March, was Julius Cæsar slain in the senate house, A. P. J. 4670, coincident with U. C. 710. Nero was born about the end of the first Julian year, and died in the currency of his 78th. Deduct now 4669, the year of Nero's birth, from 4747, the date of his death, the surplus, 78, is the age of Nero. Again $787 - 709 = 78$, the result of the two operations is the same ; but a few odd months are included. If, however, the computation proceed from the death of the first Cæsar to that of Tiberius, the third, the interval is circumscribed within the limits of

77 full

77 full years, and one natural day. For $4747 - 4670 = 77$: and $787 - 710 = 77$.

Two queries remain for discussion;—whether the historians of that and the succeeding age, have truly defined this interval;—and whether the Metropolitan's arrangement be consistent with itself, with the report of history, and with chronology.

“AUGUSTUS, the second Roman emperor, died, as Josephus testifies, after a reign of 57 years, six months, and two days *.” “Tiberius died after his predecessor 22 years, five months, and three days †.”

THE sum ($57. 6. 2 + 22. 5. 3 = 79 \text{ y. } 11 \text{ m. } 5 \text{ d.}$) exceeds the true quantity by almost three years.

“AUGUSTUS, together with Antony and Lepidus, governed almost twelve years, and lastly by himself $54\frac{1}{4}$.” “Tiberius died in the 23d of his reign §.” “Tiberius ruled with arbitrary power 23 years nearly ||.” After the consulate of Hirtius and Pansa, Augustus succeeded to that dignity. Add 56 years for this reign, and 23 for that of Tiberius, the sum is 79. But from the assassination of Julius to the consulate of Octavius, was a space of 18 months. Thus is the interval enlarged to 80 years six months **.—Easy it were to multiply authorities. But falsehood, though attested by a cloud of witnesses, does not change its nature. Can the source of this mistake be discovered? The deception is obvious, at first view. Josephus, and the author of the

* Ant. xviii. 2. 2. : and War. ii. 9. 1. † Ant. xviii. 6. 10.

‡ Suet. Octav. cap. 9. § Suet. Tib. cap. 73. 11.

|| Tacit. Annal. vi. 51. ** Dialog. de Claris Oratoribus.

Dialogue, have fallen into an egregious amplification, Suetonius assigns to Augustus a reign of almost 56; and Tacitus agrees with him, that the 23d of Tiberius was incomplete. Let the reign of each be computed from the death of Julius, the interval to that of Tiberius is precisely 77 years one day, as before. The error of the two historians last mentioned is two fold. They count two deficient years for complete; and admit, that a certain portion of the former reign was common to both emperors; yet make no abbreviation. It is to be shown, in its proper place, that the duration of the partnership in sovereignty was two years, and no more. Now as to Usher's computation.

ACCORDING to him Julius was slain A. P. J. 4670. This arrangement happily sets censure at defiance. But the reign of Tiberius is continued to 4750: the difference is 80, and the sum too much by three years. This latter number of the Julian period he connects with A. M. 4040*, and with A. D. 37, instead of 4042, and 34. Such is the fatality unavoidably resulting from his original combination of chronological numbers; and such the usefulness of a reformed Roman Calendar, at that particular time. The fitness of the time, appointed for the manifestation of Christ, might, from the considerations already set forth, be admitted. But,

* The year of the world, corresponding to A. P. J. 4750, ought to be 4045, which was the 38th from the true historical date of the nativity.

3. *As the Roman Empire, and the Christian Æra, were nearly coeval, it follows, that the first Century of both was the last Stage of the Hebrew Polity.*

ABSOLUTELY necessary it was, in virtue of many unequivocal notations in the oracles of prophecy, that the prophet, like unto Moses, should open his commission, before the close of the Jewish œconomy.

EQUALLY necessary it was, that the age of prefiguration should be of a considerable length, before the Glory of Israel, the Light of the Gentiles, and the Desire of all Nations, should be manifested to the world.

To the Israelites many signal marks of pre-eminence had been vouchsafed. “To them pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose were the fathers, and of whom, according to the flesh, Christ came*.” Should the query be repeated, “What advantage then had the Jews?” the reply is now no less proper, than in the apostolical age, “Much every way; chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles of God†.” The line of the Messiah’s extraction was limited to the progeny of Abraham by Isaac, and to the tribe of Judah by David. It had been foretold, that the greatest and last prophet to be sent to that people, should be raised up from among their brethren; and the infallible testimony of an Evangelist asserts, that the Word, made flesh, came unto his

* Rom. 9. 4.—6.

† Ch. iii. 2.

own. Had he appeared among any other people, his pretensions would have merited no credit. Or, had he appeared *to his own*, (εἰς τὰ ἴδια, his own peculiar brotherhood, a separate community, in their own land), one generation later, when the community was disbanded, the land occupied by aliens, and the temple (which the desire of all nations was to honour with his presence and ministry) covered with its own rubbish:—in that case, it would have been impossible to produce to the house of Israel, in a national establishment, the genuine evidences of his mission. The Israelites were the depositaries of those oracles which described his character, and, in a certain manner, anticipated his history. To them, in a state of dispersion, he could not have unfolded, from the writing of Moses and the prophets; from the psalms, and all the Hebrew scriptures; the things concerning himself. Galilee, and other parts of Palestine, are described as the theatre of his ministrations; and there it was requisite that he should appear a short time, *at least*, before the dissolution of the civil and religious polity.

THE time predetermined is both by the prophets and apostles characterised indefinitely as the LATTER DAYS. By which phrase is to be understood, not the consummation of things, but the last stage of the Jewish constitution;—the ultimate term beyond which that people should not exist, as a distinct and peculiar part of the human race, in a political capacity.

“GOD, who at sundry times, and in diverse manners, spake unto the fathers of the Jewish people by the prophets,

prophets, hath in these last days spoken to mankind by his Son." He having finished his personal ministry, committed the prosecution of his gracious purposes to certain chosen servants, whom he sent forth to preach the gospel to every creature. Essential wisdom and goodness had ordained, that the lost sheep of the house of Israel should have the first overtures of grace. This primary article of the commission was faithfully observed, during the eight subsequent years. But the house of Israel, still continuing to reject, as a collective body, the counsel of God against themselves, the apostles recollecting the terms of their original commission, "Ye shall be my witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judca, and in all Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth *," extended the call, without limitation, to the untutored Gentiles. "The Lord gave the word, great was the company of the preachers, and numerous were the converts, as the drops of dew from the womb of the morning." But even after the door of faith was thus opened for the Gentiles, a majority of the apostles devoted their labours to the benefit of those, who maintained the necessity of circumcision, and the inviolable obligation of all the Mosaical rites.

IN the mean time, free access being granted to the temple at Jerusalem, and to the synagogues established in every city, village, and corner of the widely-extended Roman empire; thither the apostles resorted on the seventh day of the Jewish week (Saturday), and on the

* Acts, i. 8.

first day to promiscuous assemblies, wherever met, opening and alleging that Jesus, whom they preached, was the Christ.

By a providential direction, and efficacious expedients, during the lapse of 37 years, were the temple and synagogues converted into nurseries for the infant Christian church, “Multitudes believed, both of Jews and Greeks.” All that while the disciples of Moses, hardened, for the most part, in impenitence and incredulity, accompanied with an implacable spirit of persecution, rebelled against the light. At last the day of vengeance came. They were cast away, but not finally; and when the happy time arrives, what shall their restoration be, but life from the dead?

WITH the ministry of John commenced the kingdom of God. During that week was the covenant confirmed with MANY. At the end of the same week, all the carnal ordinances of Judaism were, as beggarly elements, nailed to the cross of Christ, and thenceforth became altogether unprofitable, even in their prefigurative virtue. Continued indeed for a determined time was their use; but they were superannuated. “A new covenant had made the first old, and that which was old decayed, and was ready to vanish away*.”

THE text above recited, “God spake by the prophets in time past, at sundry times, and in diverse manners,

* Heb. viii. 13. General tradition fixes the date of this Epistle to the 7th year before the overthrow of the temple, and the desolation of Jerusalem, by Titus Vespasian. The text above quoted seems to be prophetic.

to the fathers," implies a long series of generations, under a preparatory discipline of prefigurative ordinances. What space of time was proper or sufficient for this sort of preparation, infinite wisdom could alone determine. Prophecies, being no less descriptive of an extraordinary character than types, neither the one test, nor the other, could have the full effect in authenticating a divine commission, before the lapse of at least a few generations and ages. Now, if Christ had appeared in the character of a suffering intercessor, immediately after the apostacy in Paradise, his pretensions could have been verified by no similar precedents from history, by no evidence from the records of prophetic oracles. Was it fit that Adam should be the executioner of his own Saviour? Was it possible that the Saviour, before the multiplication of the first family, could have martyrs, and the martyrs persecutors? But allow the appearance of this suffering intercessor to have been deferred to the first, second, or third generation; comparatively few must have been the witnesses. In an age of advanced population, when the arts of transmitting historical transactions with certainty to future times, and on a very conspicuous theatre, was Jesus of Nazareth executed, as a state criminal, as an impostor, as a blasphemer. The proofs of his innocence and veracity, were, in a very short time, no less convincing than his sufferings had been notorious; and the evidence, whence is inferred not only the merit of his character, but the injustice of his persecutors, never was, and never can be disproved. But had he suffered the same,

same, or the like things, in a very early stage of society, modern scepticism might have urged, with every feature of probability, "That these things were done in a corner, and that the whole was a cunningly devised fable:"—insinuations which the apostles very justly reprobate *.

THAT the appearance of the Messiah was delayed too long, the disputers of this world affirm with more plausibility than truth. The efficacy of his interposition began with the first, and will extend to the last generation of men. The growth of ignorance, licentious principles, and profligate manners, was gradual. Had Christ assumed the character of a reformer, before civil government and the light of philosophy had done their utmost, but without effect, for curing the inveterate corruption of the world, the use and necessity of such a reformer would not have been admitted. As an intermediate dispensation was the Mosaical institution introduced. "To what end served the law? It was added, because of transgressions," (predominant, and ever proceeding from evil to worse in the pagan world), "till the seed, to whom the promise was made, should come †." Had it not been for this intermediate scheme, corruption would have become, in the awful progress of degeneracy, universal, total, incurable. In this case, the promised seed must have come, without the harmonious evidence arising from history, prefiguration, and prophecy.

* Acts, xxii. 26. 2 Pet. i. 16.

† Gal. iii. 19.

IT has been shown, that any age, prior to the law of Moses, or subsequent to the dispersion of the Jews, would have been neither proper nor seasonable for the appearance of Jesus Christ in the human nature; and that no other could have these two indispensable characters,—a **FITNESS** and a **FULNESS** of the time, than that in which he did actually authenticate his divine mission*.

THESE general remarks naturally introduce the more special and determinate notations, in the evangelical history of Christ's life and ministry.

1. JESUS of Nazareth was born in the life-time of Herod the great, nominal king of Judea, and but a short space before his demise : and

2. ABOUT the time of an enrolment at Bethlehem, in virtue of a decree, in order to a taxation, by Augustus Cæsar, the Roman emperor.

3. AT twelve years of age he reasoned with the doctors in the temple, at the time of a passover.

4. THE 30th year of his natural life was coincident with the 15th of Tiberius Nero, and with the first of John the Baptist's ministry.

* The terms *soon* and *late* are relative. If the duration of the world should be prolonged four millions of years, and the Old and New Testament scriptures, in the original tongues, which are exact counterparts, be transmitted to that remote period, the truth of divine revelation would not be impaired. But the objection taken from the late introduction of the Gospel would vanish. For the transactions of A. M. 4000, would be referred to the very infancy of time.

5. ABOUT

5. ABOUT the time of the autumnal equinox, when precisely 34 years old, he was baptised.

6. HIS ministry of three years and six months expired with the crucifixion, in the 37th of his age.

ALL these events are comprehended in the reigns of Herod, Augustus, and Tiberius, as above *.

* “ The edict for an enrolment from Augustus was wisely ordered by divine Providence, not only to determine the time of Christ’s nativity, but also his tribe and family; both which were ascertained by the authentic records of two nations: the genealogies of the Jews, which were preserved with great exactness; and the archives of the Roman empire, to which the first apologists for Christianity made frequent appeals.”—*Waite’s Gosp. Hist.* p. 17.

“ Some of the ancient apologists referred to the Acts of P. Pilate, and the account given by him to Tiberius, concerning our Saviour. Such appeals, unsupported by visible and notorious facts, would certainly have been of fatal consequence to Christianity. The Acts themselves, or very authentic copies of them, could as easily be produced as they were readily quoted. The Acts of Pilate were called in question. But though nothing of that kind be now in the world, yet that such genuine Acts were once in being is not reasonably to be doubted. For it appears from Eusebius, that certain false and spurious Acts were set about to sink the credit of the true. Epiphanius mentions some appeals made by heretics to these Acts of Pilate.”—*Ditton on the Resurrection*, p. 301.

C H A P. II.

CHRONOLOGY *of* HEROD'S *Life*.

AN account of the TIMES and revolutions of empires, has been brought down to the 30th year before the Dionysian æra. A few of those explicit, and infallible chronological characters, which fix the true epoch of this seventh age, with the dates of those stupendous occurrences which signalised its commencement, and serve to arrange the history of the first 64 years, remain for investigation. With the history of three contemporary princes, Herod, Octavianus Augustus, and Tiberius Nero, is that of our Lord's birth, baptism, ministry, and crucifixion, inseparably connected. Of each in order.

I. HEROD'S *Birth*.

JOSEPHUS reports in two passages, not without an apparent variation in the number, that Herod died about the 70th year of his age, or almost 70 *. By both notations his 70th year was begun. It is afterwards to

* Ant. xvii. 8. 1. and War. i. 33. 1.

be shewn, that he died in the spring of the Varronian year 710, A. M. 4005, and of the Jul. Per. 4710. Hence deduct 70, the difference 4640 is the date of his birth. Usher, and after him Prideaux, bring it lower by two years, but neither assigns a reason for rejecting the authority of Josephus.

2. *Made Governor of Galilee.*

“ANTIPATER made his eldest son Phasaelus governor of Jerusalem and its precincts; to Herod, then a very young man of 15, he committed the administration of Galilee*.” Usher and Prideaux, on the authority of Casaubon, correct this notation by substituting 25. But both these great men, having mistaken the year of Herod’s birth, ought to have marked the number 27. The prudence, experience, and spirit, which he displayed at his entrance on that arduous province, did great honour to his abilities and years. The Varronian year 707 is the true date of this his first promotion.

3. *Different Dates of his Reign.*

IN 714 was he created king of Judea by a deed of the Roman senate. But Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, claiming the right of inheritance and possession, disputed his title by an appeal to the sword; and after an ineffectual opposition, with inferior force, was overcome, taken prisoner, and tragically executed, in 717.

* Josephus, Ant. xiv. 9. 2.

Herod thenceforth reigned without a competitor, and his accession is reckoned by both terms.

4. Rebuilds the Temple.

As an allusion to this date occurs in the gospel history, in connexion with a certain year of our Lord's ministry, it merits regard, as a chronological character. "Forty and six years was the temple in building *." By every criterion of time this conference with the Jews refers to the first year of Christ's ministry, a short time, perhaps a few months, after the first Passover. Josephus assigns two dates for this great and expensive undertaking.

"IN the 18th of his reign, Herod projected a very great work,—the rebuilding of the temple; and suspecting that the Jews, so far from contributing to the cost, would not consent to his taking on himself the whole charges, called together an assembly of the people, to whom he signified his resolution. They apprehending, that were the old edifice once demolished, he might either change his mind, or, having begun the new structure, should not be able to finish, strongly remonstrated. To convince them of his sincerity, Herod told them, that he should not pull down the fabric, till all things were ready for the new building. He accordingly provided 1000 waggons, and employed 10,000 of the most skilful artificers, stone-cutters, carpenters, &c. for preparing the materials, as soon as

* John, ii. 20.

they could be brought to the spot. Convinced of his sincerity, the people approved with cheerfulness an overture so beneficial to themselves, and honourable to their sovereign*.”

IN another passage † a different date is expressed: “In the 15th year of his reign Herod rebuilt the temple.” Which of the notations is to be preferred? It is scarcely probable, that the historian would compute Herod’s reign from the decree of the senate; for the Jews accounted him an usurper during the life of Antigonus. But, as in several parts of his works, Josephus counts by either reckoning indifferently, sometimes distinguishes the one from the other by mentioning both, and always states three years for the intermediate space, let his specified numbers be fairly examined, and a self-consistent inference deduced.

THAT the arrangements of this very eminent historian be not rashly dismissed from the tribunal of impartial criticism, two previous enquiries are equitable; first, What is the usual mode of reckoning in similar cases? and next, What might be the point which the Jews, in their arguing with our Lord, meant to establish?

FIRST, from computations in the retrograde series, the passing year, especially about the time of its commencement, is, as the source of reckoning, excluded. It has been remarked, that the Jews, in the first year of our Lord’s ministry, and some short time after the Passover, (solemnized, according to Varro, A. U. C. 783.), told

* Ant. xv. 11. 1.

† War, i. 21. 1.

him,

him, that the temple had been then 46 years in building, as our publick version renders their words. In this view the first of the 46 years is included in 783. The first year in the retrograde or ascending series was, consequently, 782.

SECONDLY, the meaning of the Jews was rather to amplify than abbreviate the number. This is the purport of their argument: "This temple employed many hands, during the lapse of 46 years;—10,000 stonecutters and carpenters, not to speak of other workmen in preparing the materials, before the foundation was laid:—besides double, triple, or 20 times that number in rearing this immense pile;—and art thou able, by thine own single strength, to demolish the whole in three days?"

SUCH is the presumptive result of the argument, according to the sentiments of our Lord's antagonists. Its agreement, or incongruity with the notations of Josephus, is now to be examined: and for this end the scheme stands as below, for the two terms of Herod's reign.

SOURCE of retrograde computation for the foundation of Herod's temple.

The 46th year ends,	} 782	The 46th year ends,	} 782
A. U. C.		A. U. C.	
Deduct - - -	46	Deduct - - -	46
	<hr/> 736		<hr/> 736
Decree of the Senate	714	Death of Antigonus	717
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Year of Herod's reign	22	Years of Herod's reign	19
	L 2		The

THE true sources of Herod's reign are, in the distinct columns, marked conformably with the faithful report of genuine history ; but by both dates, the years 714 and 717, were respectively the first of Herod. The computation must have proceeded from 713 and 716. On this principle, the foundation of the temple must have been laid, neither in the 15th nor 18th; but in the 23d or 20th of Herod. Thus far the notations of Josephus vary from the number specified in the Gospel. But in favour of the Jewish historian justice demands, that the terms he employs be interpreted, according to his probable meaning. In a quotation, already produced in the way of reference, he remarks, " that the priests built the temple itself in 18 months; or in the second year from the foundation of its walls. The author's dates are not now uniformly, without variation, in the several copies, expressed 15 and 18. Be it supposed, that the Jews reckoned the 46 years from the finishing of the work, the computation then begins in the year when Antigonus died, as by the second column, the temple was begun in the 18th and finished in the 20th of Herod. The Jews altered their opinion of the temple's age, about 50 years before Josephus wrote its history : and if both they and he committed a mistake in numeration, the Evangelist, who reports the remonstrance as it was stated, is not responsible. If both parties merit the character of precision, the 46 years expired in the year before Christ's appearance in his prophetic office ; and if this were the notion of the Jews, their words ought to be rendered, " Forty and
fix

six years hath this temple been built ;” which sense the original text easily admits *.

5. *Time of his Death.*

“ HEROD died, having enjoyed the kingdom 34 years after he had killed Antigonus ; but from the time that he was declared king by the Romans, 37, about the 25th of our November, or the 7th of the month Cisleu, which is therefore accounted a joyful and festival day, because then Herod died, who hated all wise men ; as Edward Lively, a most learned man, noted in his Chronology, in מגילות תענית, Megilloth Tanith, or Volume of the Feast †.”

LE Clerc assigns the same dates, with the only difference of substituting the Varronian year of Rome 750, for the last two chronological numbers in the Annals ‡. The number of the Julian period, though exact, requires two corrections. It is erroneous first, as put in connection with A. M. 4001, instead of 4005,

* All Aorists denote time either past or future. Those which express time not future, may, according to the truth of grammatical propriety, signify time either past, or passing. For example, τὸ δὲ Ἰησοῦ γεννηθέντος ἐν Βηθλεεμ ; “ Jesus *having been* born in Bethlehem.” Here is a notation of time fully past. Why should not τεσσαρακοντα καὶ ἕξ ἔτεσιν ἀκοδομηθῇ ὁ ναὸς ἔτος, “ This temple hath been built 46 years.” The meaning is, It is a new and firm structure, and may last ages. Matt. ii. 1. John, ii. 20.

† Usher's Annals, A. M. 4001. Jul. Per. 4710. as by him marked.

‡ See Hist. Ecclesiast. page 215.

and secondly as brought too low by eight months, November instead of March.

MACNIGHT, and his author Lardner, hesitate as to the year of Herod's death, concluding that he neither died before A. U. C. 750, nor survived 751; but conclude, that the season was the SPRING. It is here added, that it was the spring before November A. P. J. 4710, of the world 4005, and of the Varronian era 750. In Josephus the proofs are numerous and determinate;—a short time before a national fast, and before a passover, &c.

HEROD being seized with his last illness, and a rumour spread that his distemper was incurable, nay, that he was actually dead, on the very day when the Jews observed annually a national fast, certain young men were instigated by two rabbis to take down the golden image of an eagle, which, to the great displeasure of the nation, Herod had set up over the portal of the temple. They, under the very probable hope of impunity, were easily persuaded, and accordingly removed, that monument of idolatry, at noon day, in the presence of a great concourse of the worshippers. The captain of the temple, with an armed force, apprehended 40 of the mutineers, and carried them to Jericho, where Herod then was, in a state of extreme weakness. The most obnoxious were burnt alive, and an eclipse of the moon signalized the night of the execution. In the meantime a rescript arrived from Augustus, to whom had been referred the case of Antipater, a son of Herod, then convicted of a conspiracy against his father's life. The emperor

emperor having referred the matter to Herod's discretion, without recommending any other measure than acting as became a father, and a king, by inflicting either banishment or death. Antipater was immediately executed in prison. Herod died after five days;—a very short space, but fully sufficient for all the intermediate transactions. The funeral solemnities over, and seven days, as usual, spent in mourning, Archelaus repaired to Jerusalem, and went into the temple at the time of the passover; when and where he ratified his conformity to the national religion by sacrifice, &c. bespake the allegiance of his subjects, received the acclamations of all, heard the grievances of some; and forthwith set out on a voyage for Rome, in order to have his father's will, appointing himself to the succession, confirmed by authority of Augustus*.

THE passover fell that year on the 12th of our Julian April; the night of the eclipse was the full moon, precisely 30 days before that festival. The middle of the eclipse at Jerusalem was $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours after midnight, on the 13th March†.

THE fast is a character of the time, of which no vestige has occurred to the writer of these sheets, in the works of those learned men who have laboured to ascertain the date now required. In D. Levi's Rites and

* This is a very brief epitome of the chronological notations from Josephus. Ant. xvii. 6—9. War, i. 33. and II. I.

† See the calculation constructed, in Whiston's Astronomical Lectures.

Ceremonies of the Jews, p. 125, is the following remark : “ Oeder 13th, the day before the feast of Purim, is kept a fast, called the Fast of Esther, in commemoration of her having fasted three days and nights before she went to supplicate the king for the deliverance of the Jews, who were marked out for destruction by Haman ; although Esther fasted in the first month, Nisan : but that being the time of the passover, we keep the fast on the day before the feast *. Besides this fast differs from all other fasts in the year ; for this reason, because on the sabbath day is forbidden all manner of mourning or fasting : therefore, whenever a fast day happens to fall on a sabbath, (except it be the great day of expiation, which supersedes the sabbath), it is deferred till the next day, except this fast, which is anticipated two days ; the reason of which is this : the day after being Purim, which is the feast, and the day before being Friday, they could not finish the fast, on account of the sabbath beginning before dark, and they being obliged to fast till night : therefore when it happens on the sabbath, it is kept on the Thursday before.”

It is worthy of remark, that this very year, A. U. C. 750 ~~710~~, the 13th Adar fell on Saturday, the national sabbath ; and the fast, agreeably with these regulations, was actually kept on the foregoing Thursday, the 8th of our March. Thus is ascertained the solemnity which characterizes the time of taking down the golden eagle. It would have been extremely satisfactory, if

* Purim in Adar.

Mr. Levi had applied this passage in Josephus to an anniversary, in that age so very ancient, and at this day celebrated periodically.

THESE characters of time, numerous, direct, and all in unison, divest of probability the arrangement of Lively, Usher, Le Clerc, &c. built on the slender authority of the Rabbitical Book on Fasts and Festivals.

6. *Were all the Years of this Reign, as differently dated, full?*

THIS enquiry is the more necessary, as, by taking eight months from the term of Herod's life, the duration of his reign is proportionably shortened. But the result depends on the solution of a difficult problem ;—the season of the year when he was first created king at Rome. From sundry circumstances of time incidentally mentioned by Josephus, it is presumed, that the Parthians placed Antigonus on the throne of his father, Aristobulus, early in the spring A. U. C. 714 ; and that the Roman senate decreed that honour for Herod about the time of the ensuing summer solstice.

HEROD prefaging what soon came to pass, the pre-pollent force of Antigonus, in concert with the Parthians, fled to Rome, imploring assistance and protection. In his voyage from Pamphylia, he was in danger of shipwreck from tempestuous weather, but escaped to Rhodes, thence to Brundisium, and hence to Rome, where being invested with royalty, he, after a short abode of seven days, went back to Brundisium, whence resuming his voyage, he arrived at Ptolemais, a sea port
in

in Palestine, after a short expedition of about three months. Finding that Antigonus had kept his mother, sister, and family, ever since his retreat, in close siege at Masada, a fortress in the tribe of Judah, he hastened to their relief. His brother Joseph, who all the while repelled the assailants, at last reduced to extremity for want of water, had resolved, in desperation, to attempt an escape. But a plentiful fall of rain having supplied all the cisterns, Herod came up in time to relieve his friends. This circumstance plainly indicates the summer season. It is here mentioned purely as a conjecture; for, in the history of the second commencement, more decisive notations occur; and it may perhaps be shewn, that each computation originates from the same day of the same month in two different years.

THE first of the feast of seven days, provided by Antony for Herod, at his inauguration, is by Josephus denominated, in two passages, the FIRST DAY of his reign, A. U. C. 714 *. It was afterwards, as the original date of his regal honours, distinguished by the title of NATALIS REGNI, *the nativity of his kingdom*. In its future repetitions it was celebrated with regal magnificence; but none of the historians specify the day of the month.

“HEROD took Jerusalem, and made Antigonus a prisoner, in the consulate of M. Agrippa and Canidius Gallus, in the 185th olympiad, on the third month, on the solemnity of the fast, as if a periodical revolution of

* Ant. xiv. 14. 1. and War, i. 14. 4.

calamities had returned, since the reduction of the same city by Ptolemy, after 27 years *."

It may be enquired whether this were not the anniversary of his first appointment by the senate, and also the source of the second reckoning?

AGRIPPA and Gallus were consuls A. U. C. 717. That year was the fourth of the 185th olympiad; and the olympic years were always counted from the new moon before the summer solstice. In the first year of the first olympiad, that new moon fell on the 9th July; and the next autumnal equinox on the 1st October. After 740 years, or 185 olympiads, the 5th July was the time of the summer solstice in 717. Whether Josephus meant the third month of the Hebrew year, or of the siege, has improperly been controverted. This author elsewhere† mentions the fifth month of the siege, and then reckons only from the term of Herod's engaging in that enterprize; for Sosius had, with a numerous army, begirt the city one full month before. The third month of the year must be the true notation. "Herod marched up to Jerusalem, about the end of winter, in the third year of his reign ‡." "At the end of the siege it was summer §." This criterion of time corresponds to the commencement of the olympic year, and to the third Hebrew month. The historian omits the day of the month, though he specifies it by a character

* Josephus, Ant. xiv. 16. 3.

† They bore a siege of five months. War, i. 18. 2.

‡ War, i. 17. 8.

§ Ant. xiv. 16. 2.

then

then well known, but now obscure; on the SOLEMNITY of the FAST.

THE Hebrew festivals and fasts, as well those of human as of a divine appointment, are an indispensable directory in calculation. Without a middle term of such exquisite use, and so infallible both in its principles and conclusions, chronology could not have a firm basis. Moses prescribed no fast for the third month; neither is any of a subsequent date to be found in Levi's Account of the Rites and Ceremonies of the modern Jews. Josephus, however, often refers to the fast of that month, as solemnized in his time: and it has already been remarked, that it was enacted to commemorate the introduction of idol-worship into Samaria, in the first of Rehoboam. The 23d of the third month was the time of its observance annually. In the year of Rome 717, the 23d of Sivan was coincident with the 22d of June; and this seems to be the most probable date of Herod's accession, whether reckoned from the decree of the senate, or from the capture of the city.

DID this conclusion rest on one doubtful character of time, or on the authority of an equivocal record, when or by whom written, none can tell, it might be rejected as an ideal conjecture. But with the evidence arising from calculation, from the harmony of national eras, and magistracies, from several specifications of seasons, it derives every criterion of probability.

OF this complicated disquisition the result is, that Herod died about three months before the end of his 37th year from the decree of the senate, and of his

34th from the reduction of Jerusalem : for $750-713=37$; and $750-716=34$; from each remainder three months are to be deducted.

7. The foregoing Computations applied to the historical Date of Christ's Nativity.

IN the days of Herod the king was born John the Baptist, and Jesus Christ about six months after *. In the same reign, and but a very short space before its termination, was Jesus, in his infancy, conveyed into Egypt, and recalled at the accession of Archelaus †.

THE visit of the eastern sages at Bethlehem must be referred to the interval from the first to the 40th day of our Lord's life. On the latter he certainly was presented in the temple, whence his parents returned with him, not to Bethlehem, but immediately to Nazareth, in Galilee, and there was intimated to them the warning for their removal with him into Egypt, together with the reason of that injunction. " There they continued until the death of Herod ‡." All these notations justify the position, that, according both to the Hebrew and Roman computation, Jesus was born in the year before Herod's demise. The time of the recess in Egypt is a point which has unhappily divided the sentiments of chronologers and critics. All however agree, that the return thence was immediately subsequent to the death of Herod.

* Luke, i.

† Matt. ii. 1—19.

‡ Matt. ii. 15.

FROM the age of the infants comprehended in the bloody edict for a general massacre in Bethlehem, and its precincts, ("two years old and under,") has it been conjectured, that either our Lord was born about two years before the execution of that edict; or, that Herod lived as long after. By the latter clause of the alternative, the residence in Egypt was two years. It is replied to both clauses in common, that, from the capricious humour of a desperate tyrant, driven to madness by diseases, fury, jealousy, and the dread of a political revolution, no certain conclusion is deducible. Resolved, at any rate, not to permit the escape of one innocent victim, he extended the terms of the sanguinary mandate to two years and under; though Jesus, at the time, might be an infant of a few days or weeks. But the hypothesis merits a more special and minute examination.

FIRST; if our Lord were two years old, or nearly so, at the date of the mandate, his age must have been more than twelve when he conferred with the doctors in the temple, in the year after the removal of Archelaus; which year coincides in astronomical and historical connection with the taxation levied by Cyrenius; Judea having then, and no sooner, become a Roman province: for *till then*, Herod and Archelaus had paid a stipulated sum into the Roman treasury, as a yearly composition for all the revenues accruing from the lands and other property in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. While that regulation was in force, no Roman officers either did or could impose taxes on the inhabitants.

inhabitants individually. Farther, if our Lord's age were two years at the date of that edict, he was more than 30 years old in the 15th of Tiberius, or the first of John's ministry. But this character of time stands, and must ever remain, invariably fixt on the infallible basis both of prophetic and historical evidence.

SECONDLY ; suppose Herod to have lived two years after the execrable massacre at Bethlehem, the whole chronology of his life, above adjusted by coexistent events, almost to the exactness of a single day, is totally unhinged ; a compact chain disunited, and the coherence of every link violently broken. By what ?—the authority of a bold and paradoxical conjecture.

FINALLY ; in the spirit of licentious surmise, which assumes every thing, but proves nothing, be it postulated, in direct opposition to the testimony of two evangelists, that Jesus was born in the fourth year before the vulgar era, as stated by Archbishop Usher, the consequences must be admitted ; such as, the crucifixion did not fall within the procuratorship of P. Pilate, neither in the reign of Tiberius Nero ; though that great man has protracted both these magistracies three years beyond their final period, if the computation proceed by the true years of the world.

THE season of that year, which was signalized by the manifestation of Christ in human nature, is now, if possible, to be ascertained. It has already been shewn that this event, if fixed, as is usually done, to the 25th, and the tragical executions in so many families at Bethlehem,

lehem, to the 28th of December, immediately before the death of Herod, the flight into Egypt was prior both to these executions, and to the 40th day of Christ's life, or second of February, the time appointed for his presentation in the temple. It was in like manner suggested, that the time assigned for the slaughter of the innocents, contradicts no report of history, common or canonical; but still this concession doth not assert the truth of the computation.

“THE times of the birth and passion of Christ, with such like niceties, being not material to religion, were but little regarded by the Christians of the first age. They who began first to celebrate them, placed them in the cardinal points of the year; as the annunciation of the Virgin Mary, on the 25th of March, which, when Julius Cæsar corrected the calendar, was the vernal equinox *.” Whether the primitive fathers, either from ignorance of exact periods in reckoning, or from inattention to terms clearly defined, or lastly, from a predilection in favour of usages, previously established by prescription, is a frivolous enquiry. Certain it is, that in matters of chronological precision, their works, or fragments of them, still preserved, do not prove them expert, much less infallible. The great author proceeds: “Neither was there any certain tradition about the years of Christ. For the Christians, who first began to enquire into such things, as Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Tertullian, Jul. Africanus, Lac-

* Sir Isaac Newton on the Prophecies, p. 144.

tantius, Jerom, Auſtin, Sulp. Severus, and as many as place the death of Chriſt in the 15th or 16th of Tiberius, make Chriſt to have preached but one year, or at moſt but two.” What confidence is due to the arrangements of thoſe men, in other good qualities however venerable, who connect the time of the paſſion with the 15th or 16th of Tiberius? Yet with juſt as little deference to the opinion of the paſſing and ſubſequent generations, certain authors, of no ſubordinate rank in the ſcale of literary fame, venture to honour, with their ſanction, the no leſs abſurd concluſion, that Chriſt’s miniſtry was comprized within the narrow ſpace of one or two years. Short indeed was the ſeaſon of his life and uſefulneſs. But why circumscribe both within a compaſs diſproportionate to his hiſtory?

IN the eaſtern churches one feſtival only was appropriated to the commemoration of the nativity and epi- phany, or manifeſtation of Chriſt to the Gentiles, in the perſons of the wiſe men from the Eaſt. The 25th December was firſt obſerved as the anniversary of the incarnation in the weſt. The more remote in local ſituation, the leſs is the authority of this uſage. But thoſe of the proteſtant churches who adopt it, rather conſider it as an inſtance of conformity to ancient preſcription, than expreſs their conviction that the particular day, ſo obſerved, is the true chronological date.

WHATEVER be ſaid as to the time aſſigned for the martyrdom of the babes at Bethlehem, the date of the nativity, of the preſentation in the temple, and of the flight into Egypt, muſt be placed as much higher as the

gospel history requires, to give consistency to its parts. Forty days are sufficient; and this correction, obvious to common sense, will connect the time of our Lord's birth with the 15th November.

As this alteration is proposed for rectifying the chronology, not for introducing innovations in practice; and, as both prophecy and history are silent concerning the precise day of the event now under investigation, it may be requisite, with the Christian fathers, to prefer some one of the four cardinal points, in coincidence with some one prefigurative service of the Jewish church. The Feast of Booths, both in the contiguity of the time, and in the similarity of prefigurative ceremonies, is the most probable of all.

THE paschal lamb, with one of its appendant observances, the oblation of the first fruits was, as an infallible interpreter of the Hebrew ritual affirms, a striking representation of "Christ, our passover, sacrificed for us, and then rising from the dead as the first fruits of them that slept." The feast of weeks, kept on the 50th day from the offering of the first fruits year by year, together with the giving of the law from Sinai, on the first year of its institution, adumbrated the communication of the Holy Ghost, in his wonderful operations, on the day of Pentecost, at Jerusalem. In both these cases, the antitype realised every circumstance in the types, that of the time not excepted. Scarcely is it supposable, that the Feast of Tabernacles had no reference to the incarnation of Christ. Those who maintain the negative, will be reduced to the absurdity of
of

of putting a very frigid gloss on a very significant allusion of an evangelist, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt (*ἐσκήνωσεν*, pitched his tent) among us; and we beheld his glory," &c. Exclude the circumstance relative to the appointed season of this solemnity, the analogy is obvious. But connect it with the rest, the encampment, the pillar of fire, a temporary residence during a pilgrimage, to which Christ's natural life was nearly equal, the allusion acquires propriety, resemblance, significance, and energy.

To omit the words of an eminent writer in the past century, than whom few possessed more original ideas, and none surpassed him in the faculty of interpreting figurative language, were unpardonable.

"It is incredible that this *principal* feast should not be a type of some *principal* thing concerning Christ, as well as the rest; it being as solemn as either of the other two, nay, rather the chief of the three, as having a more extraordinary course of sacrifices than either of the other; yea, one day's more continuance, it having eight days. To it nothing but his incarnation and nativity can be applied; and it may be the eighth day was added, as figuring the time of his circumcision*. But it will be objected, that the birth of Christ was in December; and the feast of tabernacles was kept the

* The worthy author might have mentioned another circumstance of pre-eminence peculiar to this ordinance. It was ushered in with the apparatus of a great day of expiation for all Israel. For the Redeemer a body was prepared, that he might be capable of suffering for the sins of the world.

15th of the 7th month, which answered in a manner to our September. The interval is three months. In answer, give me leave to relate, not my own opinion, nor as my own, but that of the most learned chronologers; the sum of which is, that the birth of our Saviour was at the time of the feast of tabernacles. For first, it is apparent in the primitive church was neither certainty nor agreement about the time of our Lord's nativity, as Clemens of Alexandria witnesseth; and himself saith, that those who enquire more exactly, do assign the 25th May. Others assigned other times, as Epiphanius witnesseth, 400 years almost after Christ: so long, therefore, there was no certainty. After the time of Constantine, the day we now observe was chosen, and first in the Latin church; but not in the Greek till the days of Chrysostom, who made an oration, yet extant, upon the first observing of this day, which he says they then received from the Latin church. If any would know, after so much uncertainty of opinion, how they came at last to resolve upon this day, they will tell you, that it was upon a false supposal, and a mistaken ground, &c.*"

FROM history and analogy every probability indicates the autumnal equinox, and the feast of tabernacles in the year of the Julian Period 4709, or the 749th of the Varronian era. On these principles easy it were

* Joseph Mede's Works, p. 266. Those who desire to obtain fuller historical information, may peruse the sequel of this author's argument, or Bedford's Chronology, p. 416—418.

to bring the subject to the test of calculation. But minuteness is not here affected. By this computation the age of Christ, at the time of Herod's death, was six months, the distance between the opposite equinoxes.

A TERM, or first point in reckoning, either assumed or discovered, will be subservient to a just arrangement of historical events, from this era of the nativity to the demise of Tiberius.

7. Archelaus.

HIS accession may be dated from the vacancy of the throne, about the 20th of March. Josephus, in one passage, assigns nine years to the duration of his government, in another, ten*. In each is related a dream concerning ears of corn eaten by oxen, the numbers of both being expressed with the like variation. That singular dream, with its interpretation by Simon the Essene, who said it presaged the length of his reign, Archelaus reported to his friends some time before his removal to Rome. But the notations of time, as contradictory, are indecisive. Other self-consistent dates, however, occur in the same author, and in favour of the larger number. 1. In the History of his own Life† he relates, that his father, Matthias, was born in the TENTH of Archelaus' government. 2. That in the currency of that year, not only the chiefs of the people in Samaria and Judea, but

* War. ii. 7. 3. ; and Ant. xvi. 13. 2.

† Section 1.

even his own brothers, preferred a complaint against him, of tyranny, and other instances of maladministration, at Cæsar's tribunal; who dispatched a messenger to apprehend his person, and conduct him to Rome *. These orders being executed, Archelaus was tried, found guilty, and sent into exile at Vienne in Gaul. The time spent in transmitting the complaint of grievances, in the voyage of the messenger, in his return with the prisoner, and in the formalities of his trial, may fairly be supposed to have taken up the remainder of that year. 3. That Philip, the brother of Archelaus, died in the 20th of Tiberius, after he had been tetrarch of Gaulonitis, and other principalities, 37 years†. The 20th of Tiberius is computed from the death of Augustus, and ends in the year after the crucifixion, precisely 37 years from the death of Herod, wanting four days, and 27 after the banishment of Archelaus:—all which notations evince, that the length of his reign was ten full years, ending in the 11th of our Lord's life, and 7th of the vulgar era.

8. *Procurators in Judea from Archelaus to the Death of Tiberius.*

THEIR number, and years of magistracy, are collected from Josephus and Prideaux.

Coponius	-	2	Brought forward	6
Marcus Ambivius		3	Valerius Gratus	11
Annius Rufus	-	1	Pontius Pilate	10
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		6		27

* Ant. xvii. 13. 2.

† Ant. xviii. 4. 6.

This

This sum is the interval from the banishment of Archelaus to the death of Tiberius Nero, in the year after the crucifixion. But it is requisite to specify a few of the intermediate events, coincident with certain events of our Lord's life.

9. *Confiscation of Archelaus' Estate.*

“JUDEA was added to the province of Syria, and Augustus sent Cyrenius*, who had been invested with the dignity of a consul, to levy a tax in Syria, and sell the house of Archelaus. With him he sent also Coponius, of the equestrian order, to have supreme power over the Jews, even that of capital punishment, without reference or appeal to the emperor, as had till now been the usual practice, in the 37th year of Cesar's victory over Antony at Actium†. This author often characterises the date of the same event, both by cardinal and ordinal numbers. From the battle at Actium to the procuratorship of Coponius, excluding both, the interval is full 37 years, being the 38th of Augustus's reign, the twelfth of our Lord's age, the first after the degradation of Archelaus. In that year, at the time of the passover, which was the 12th return of that festival from his own nativity, and also from the decease of Herod, Jesus was found in the temple, sitting among the doctors, both hearing their communications, and asking them questions. Josephus

* Quirinus, Luke, ii. 2.

† Ant. xvii. 13. 1. xviii. 1. 1. and ch. ii. 1. War. ii. 8. 1.

characterises the accession of Archelaus, and an evangelist the first of Coponius, without naming him, by one common criterion—A PASSOVER;—and thus, without a fractional part of time, is the intermediate space defined.

IN the same chapter, and in the same year, the same evangelist mentions the first actual taxation in Judea, which then, and no sooner, was united with the presidency of Syria, but under a distinct procurator *. That tax, especially from the manner of collecting it, by Roman officers, from house to house, was, at the very time, extremely unpopular: and hence *publicans* were proverbially classed with the *worst of sinners*. Josephus relates the tumultuary measures of Judas, the ring-leader of that faction, and refers to this particular year: “In his (Coponius’) administration, Judas, a Galilean, prevailed with his countrymen to revolt, and said, those who would endure to pay the Romans a tax, and would, after God, submit to the domination of mortal men, were cowards †.” The distractions which on that occasion embroiled the tetrarchies in Palestine, were not soon forgotten. After the lapse of 25 years, Gamaliel appealed to them as memorable and recent facts, and as examples of opposition alike unjustifiable and abortive: “After him (Theudas) rose up Judas in Galilee, *in the days of the taxing*, and drew away much people after him: he also perished: and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed ‡.”

* Luke, ii. 2—42.

† War, viii. 2. 1.

‡ Acts, v. 37.

“ THAT the Census in the end of Herod's reign should have produced no disturbances may seem strange, when it is remembered that the subsequent enrolment under Cyrenius occasioned the sedition of Judas. But the temper of a nation is not always the same. Much depends on the wisdom and address of those who are at the head of affairs. Herod was himself a man of extraordinary abilities, and had officers under him dextrous in managing the humours of a multitude; and therefore it cannot be thought strange, that the enrolment in his reign should have been tamely submitted to, while that which Quirinus made after Archelaus's banishment threw the nation into such confusion*.”

OF the insurrection raised by Judas, Josephus gives this account: “ All sorts of mischiefs sprang from these men [Judas and his faction]. One violent war came upon the back of another, and we lost our friends who used to alleviate our pains. There were also very great robberies and murders of our principal men. This was done indeed on pretence for the public welfare, but in reality from the hope of gain to themselves. Hence arose seditions and murders, which sometimes fell on their own people and sometimes on their enemies†.”

* Macnight, Chron. Dissert. i. p. 75.

† Ant. xviii. 1. 1.

C H A P. III.

CHRONOLOGY *of* AUGUSTUS CESAR.I. *His Birth.*

SUETONIUS connects the nativity of this famous personage, with the 24th September, in the consulate of M. Tullius Cicero and C. Antonius, the year of Catiline's conspiracy, and consequently in the 691st of the Varronian era*. This date is confirmed by two authentic notations; the one in Tacitus†, who has preserved a curious remark of the populace at the very time of his death‡;—"That the same day of the year was the first of his magistracy, and the last of his life:"—the other is taken from the same Suetonius, who affirms in the life of Octavius §, that he invaded

* D. Octav. cap. 5. This author mentions a different date, though of the same year; but as a vulgar tradition, and resting on the authority of an astrologer, P. Nigidius—the 13th December;—that very night when the senate was deliberating on the fate of the conspirators, cap. 94. But the place and manner of mentioning this report shews, that this judicious writer repeated it, with no small degree of academic faith.

† Annal. 1. cap. 9.

‡ 19th Aug.

§ Cap. 26.

the

the consulate in the 20th year of his life. With this arrangement Paterculus, a contemporary writer, agrees, and is more determinate. "He entered on his consulate when he wanted but one day to complete his 20th year*," and "that this was 72 years before the consulate of Marcus Vinicius," A. U. C. 783. Hence deduct 72, the surplus 711 is the true term. All these notations are in exact harmony, except that in Tacitus.

2. His first Consulate.

THIS date is already ascertained. It only remains to be observed, that the ease and perspicuity of computation require that his magistracy be supposed to commence about 18 months earlier, from the assassination of the first Cæsar on the 15th March 710. Thus the consulship of Julius and Antony, and that of Hirtius and Panfa, for a part of the next year, are superseded. This is the reckoning of Josephus, and accords much better with the chronological characters in the gospels.

3. His Age and Death.

THIS subject of disquisition has likewise been in part anticipated. A few points are briefly to be retouched, with additional remarks. If the time of his death can, with certainty, be discovered, the deduction of a small quantity, both from his life and reign, will be requisite and necessary.

* L. ii 65.

SUETONIUS suggests one circumstance, (generally omitted by the other historians), subservient to this discovery. "A law having been passed, on a motion from the consuls, appointing Tiberius to be joined with Augustus in the administration of certain provinces, and in the celebration of the next lustrum, and this last solemnity having been finished, Tiberius instantly set out for Illyricum, one of those provinces committed to his government; and Augustus accompanied him part of the way, but died before his return to Rome*."

THIS criterion of time, though defective, shows that Augustus died a very short space after the exhibition of a lustrum. But Livy supplies this defect †. "In the Varronian year of Rome 450, it is said that Q. Fabius Maximus, the censor, instituted the solemn procession of the Roman knights, of which the anniversary is the 15th July." The ceremony is thus described by a late author: "Every fifth year the Equites rode up to the Cenfor, seated in his curule chair, before the capitol, and dismounting, led along their horses in their hands before him, and in this manner were reviewed ‡." Augustus, by every account, died on the 19th August, A. U. C. 766, or 35 days after the lustrum, and according to Suetonius, just as many before the conclusion of his 76th year §.

USHER, Prideaux, and others, connect his decease with the number of the Julian Period 4727, coincident

* Vita. Tib. Neronis, cap. 21.

† Lib. ix. 46.

‡ Dr. Adams's Roman Antiquities, p. 28.

§ D. Octav. Aug. cap. 100.

with

with the Varronian year 767. This date is brought too low by one year : for, by the computation of Suetonius, $766 - 691 = 75$, leaves but 75 for the age of this emperor, and the last incomplete. Thus one year must be retrenched from his life. The rotations of the lustrum are an infallible character of time, from the very date of the institution, in the first of Servius Tullius, Ann. Varron. 176. This sum deduct from 766, and the difference, 590, divided by 5, quotes 118 lustra, without a remainder. Though this solemnity was omitted for 16, or even 40 years occasionally, never did one deviation happen from the regular returns of this circulating period.

Two years must also be deducted either from this, or from the subsequent reign ; for, if 56 full years be assigned to the one, and 23 to the other, the interval, from the slaughter of Julius to the death of Tiberius, is 79 years ; which exceed the truth by two. For a reason, afterwards to be produced, the reign of Augustus must be abridged.

4. *Decree of Enrolment at Bethlehem.*

“ IT came to pass, in those days, (of Herod’s reign), that a decree went forth from Cesar Augustus, that ALL *the* WORLD should be taxed*.” In the Roman phraseology ALL *the* WORLD was a term equivalent to the then widely-extended EMPIRE of that people. But provision having been made by a constitutional ordinance,

* Luke, ii. 1.

(the census, about six centuries before), for fixing the public revenues, in proportion to the private property of the subjects; no particular decrees for that purpose occur in former periods, much less at that time. Augustus indeed celebrated, during his long reign, three notable lustra, each at the distance of 20 years, at the usual times, and not in virtue of an extraordinary statute. In the first Augustus presided together with Mark Agrippa, Ann. Varr. 726; in the other alone, 746; in the third with Tiberius Nero, 766*. But the monumental inscriptions marked on those occasions, and still extant, declare the quality of the persons enrolled and taxed;—Roman citizens; (*censa sunt civium Romanorum capita.*) Besides, none of all the three years can, by any reasonable computation, be brought to agree with the time of Christ's nativity.

It may be surmised that the provinces, either all or some of their numbers, might be enrolled, at least at times distinct from that of the national CENSUS. Surmises are not evidence. As to any general survey of the provinces, during this interval of 40 years, history is entirely silent: and every presumption induces the belief that the decree to which the evangelist refers, was restricted to Herod's dominions; for as the Romans denominated the empire by the title of *Totus Terrarum Orbis*, the WHOLE WORLD, so the sacred writers called the land of Palestine, *Πασα Οικουμένη*, an expression equivalent to the *whole* country of Judea, Samaria, and Ga-

* Suet. Octav. Aug. cap. 27.

lilee. Thus much for the terms. But does the presumption now suggested rest on the basis of historical probability?

HEROD'S country, about three years before his death, was very much infested by a powerful body of Trachonitish robbers, who had been encouraged in their depredations by one Syllæus, the deputy of Obodas, king of Arabia Petræa, an ally of the Roman empire. With a military force Herod passed over into that country, and put to death numbers of the invaders, but found the main body in a fortress, (granted them by Syllæus), where they were inaccessible. After this unsuccessful expedition, the exasperated thieves, having acquired an accession of force from Syllæus, made a fresh irruption into Judea and Celestria, in their progress laying waste the country and villages. Herod applied for redress to the governors of Syria. By their mediation Syllæus agreed to compromise matters, and also to pay a debt of 60 talents formerly borrowed from Herod, within 30 days. Without performing any part of his engagements Syllæus went to Rome, with a complaint against Herod, as carrying on unprovoked hostilities with the Arabians. Augustus giving implicit credit to this report, expressed his resentment in a letter to Herod, setting forth, in terms more acrimonious than moderate, "That formerly he had acted towards him as a friend, but thenceforth would treat him as a dependant." By a happy conjuncture of incidents, Herod proved the falsehood of the whole charge at the emperor's tribunal, and so effected a reconciliation*.

* Jos. Ant. xvi. chap. ix. p. 16.

HERE seems to be a very natural account of the decree in its cause and origin. Augustus, in the first transport of indignation, having formed the resolution of reducing Herod to the abject condition of a vassal, had, as a previous step, emitted an edict for the survey of his dominions. But that ferment of displeasure subsiding, and after some time the innocence of Herod being vindicated, he forbore his resentment; and though the survey had been executed, its effects were suspended. This reconciliation took place in the 34th of Herod's reign, and only a few months before his death. In this short interval (and neither sooner nor later) is the enrolment at Bethlehem to be sought and found.

HISTORY farther reports, "That in the reign of Augustus, an enrolment was made in Judea, by Sentius Saturninus *." This census could be no other than the *ἀπογραφὴ*, *enrolment*, in the evangelist. In both the name of the emperor is expressed, and the *whole world* or *land* is restricted to *Judea*. Tertullian adds the name of the Roman commissioner. Saturninus succeeded Agrippa, as president of Syria, in the 26th of Herod's reign, computed from the defeat or death of Antigonus. Of his intermeddling, either by authority or otherwise, with the affairs of the Jews, not one vestige occurs in history prior to his concern in the litigation between Herod and Syllæus. He is next mentioned as a judge, in the trial of Herod's sons by Mariamne †, in the second year

* Censu actus sub Augusto, in Judea, per Sentium Saturninum. Tertull. Contra Marcion. Lib. iv. 19.

† Ant. xvi. 11. 3.

before their father's death: and the very year of that death he was superseded by the appointment of Quintilius Varus, his successor in the province of Syria. It has been shown that the decree for the enrolment was not issued before the Varronian year 748; and it is now certain, from sundry explicit notations of time, that it could not be executed by Saturninus after 749. It must therefore have been executed at Bethlehem, about the time of the autumnal equinox, the true historical date of our Lord's nativity *.

* “ In this matter were two distinct particular actions done at distinct and different times, the *survey* and the *levy*. In Luke, ii. 1. the former is to be understood, and in verse second the latter. This reconciles that evangelist with Josephus, from whom it is manifest that Cyrenius was not governor of Syria, and levied no tax upon Judea, till after Archelaus was deposed, and that country brought under a procurator, which was above eleven years after the decree for the *survey*. If therefore the second verse of the second chapter be so rendered as to imply the *levying* of the tax, according to the *description* mentioned in the former verse, was first executed, this will remove all difficulties, and the text can well bear this interpretation.” Prid. P. ii. p. 507. The more full consideration of this matter is reserved for its proper place.

C H A P. IV.

C H R O N O L O G Y *of* T I B E R I U S N E R O .

FOR the date of his birth Suetonius assigns three distinct and successive years, characterised by as many pairs of consuls;—Æmilius Lepidus and Munatius Plancus, Aulus Hirtius and Vibius Pansa, Servilius Isauricus and Lucius Antonius;—corresponding to the Varronian years 711, 712, 713. With this author Tacitus and Dion Cassius agree, in the report that he died in his 78th year. If the last were incomplete A. U. C. 787, and 711 be subducted, he died before the end of his 76th. Either therefore his birth must be anticipated, or his life protracted two years.

It must occur to the reader's recollection, that all the Roman historians, not excepting even those who admit a part of Nero's reign to have been common to that of his predecessor, assign to both a period of 79 or 80 years, from the premature and tragical death of Julius. The time of the partnership in empire was two years. Let these be retrenched, and then the 78th of Nero will coincide with 787 in March. Evident is the absurdity of dating his birth from 711, and prolonging

longing his reign to 789. For thus our Lord was not crucified in the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate, as all the evangelists testify ; neither in the reign of Tiberius, as Tacitus relates ; but in that of Caligula.

THE next subject of disquisition is the two-fold date of this reign. Certain it is that he returned from his last expedition in Germany, and, besides other honours, had a splendid triumph, in the consulate of Germanicus Cæsar and Fonteius Capito, A. U. C. 765. Among other honours on that occasion conferred, one was, an equal authority and power in the administration of certain provinces with Augustus. On the 19th of August 766, he became sole emperor by the death of his colleague. The question now is, from which of these dates is his fifteenth year, that much celebrated chronological character in the gospel history, to be computed ? Every criterion of historical truth establishes the former. From the last year of Augustus's sole administration in 764, deduct the year of the first Cæsar's assassination, 710, the remainder, 54, brings forward the reckoning to the 20th March 765, the very point whence the government of Tiberius is here supposed to commence ; and $765 + 15 = 780$, makes the 16th March the first day of his 15th year, or the 70th from the slaughter of Julius. This unusual term of computation for the short interval from the rise of the Roman monarchy, to the death of the second emperor, is chosen, from no affectation of singularity, or merely for the sake of controverting the truth of arrangements,

which prescription has made familiar. The author's sole motive is the application of a regulating measure from the first to the 78th Julian year;—a measure precisely equal to the natural life of Tiberius, with the deduction of eight months, without defect or surplus. In this space Augustus began, under the limitations abovementioned, his reign of 54 years on the 16th March; and on the same day, in the rotation of years, that of Tiberius, comprehending 23 years, both began and ended. A test of so much use and certainty, though obvious even to superficial readers, has unaccountably been overlooked by the most penetrating critics in chronology, and escaped the researches of all the Harmonists.

To prevent, however, the censure of innovation, let the accession of Nero, in the life-time of Augustus, be reckoned (only one year before the demise of the latter) from the 20th August 765, and let 14 be added, the operation denotes the 19th August 779; and by this statement of terms the 15th of his reign terminated the 20th August 780. At the time of the preceding vernal equinox, the word of God came to John in the wilderness. This computation is just, but less perspicuous. For the expositors of the gospel having generally referred the death of Herod to November, (about eight months after its true astronomical date), computed the reigns both of Archelaus and of Nero from a too advanced season of the year. But all these notations being brought nearly to the beginning of either the

Roman or Hebrew year, computation proceeds in an orderly series from one common point, exhibiting, as in a procession, personages and incidents.

JOHN the Baptist's ministry is a notable era both in prophecy and history. Then began the 70th week, to which was assigned the work of confirming the covenant with many during its currency. In the middle of the same week was the Most Holy to be anointed, the sacrifice and oblation to cease; and at its expiration, the Messiah to be cut off.

THIS oracle, with respect to the order of the events foretold, derives abundant elucidation from history. For instance: "The BEGINNING of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets, Behold I send my messenger—the voice of one crying in the wilderness *." "All the prophets, and the law, prophesied until John †." To that word, "which was preached through all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism, which John preached," the apostles referred their hearers: and their doctrine in substance was, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power, &c. ‡"

THAT the commencement of John's ministry might be transmitted to subsequent generations, with various discriminating characters of the TIME, the evangelist describes it by no less than six historical notations, then universally known, and still extant in the annals of that age; 1. the 15th of Tiberius Cesar; 2. the procura-

* Mark, i. 1—3.

† Mat. xi. 13.

‡ Acts, x. 37, 38.

torship of Pontius Pilate; 3. the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas in Galilee, the same who put John the Baptist to death; 4. of Herod Philip in Iturea and Trachonitis, distinct names for the same principality. These were sons of Herod the Great, and brothers of Archelaus, to whom were assigned the parts of his dominions already mentioned. That Antipas was living in this year is certain; for John, some time after, reproved him for having taken his brother Philip's wife, who was still living. Thus is evinced the coexistence of Antipas and Philip at the time specified: 5. the tetrarchy of Lyfanius in Abilene, a province of Cælesyria; 6. the conjunct pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas.

It is here requisite and necessary to ascertain every criterion subservient to the distinction of the two terms, whence the accession of Tiberius is to be reckoned.

In the first year common to the two emperors, M. Ambivius was procurator in Judea; in the second, A. Rufus. No sooner was Augustus dead than Tiberius removed Rufus, and gave that trust to Valerius Gratus. His commission lasted 11 years, (as in page 92), and consequently expired with the appointment of his successor P. Pilate, in the 13th of Tiberius. Count forward the 10 years of Pilate's residence in Judea; $13 + 10 = 23$. But if this reign commenced with the procuratorship of Gratus, it did not exceed 21, and the last year incomplete; for the emperor died after a reign of 20 years and one day. The evangelist, for all these reasons, counted from the joint administration, according to the usage of that age, which, in similar cases, obtains

obtains every where. The first of Pilate's procuratorship was consequently the 15th of Tiberius. Had he been invested with the imperial dignity but one year sooner, the word of God must have come to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness, Valerius Gratus being then governor of Judea. Such is the precision, such the infallible certainty of the chronological notations in the gospel. This evangelist has marked one decisive circumstance, which corrects all the Roman historians, as to the true interval from the assassination of Julius Cæsar, to the 15th of Tiberius Nero, the last included ;—it is 69, not 71 years : and thus is rectified the chronology of the Augustan age.

THE beginning of the gospel is characterised, lastly, by a conjunct pontificate—that of Annas and Caiaphas.—This criterion is no less determinate. Valerius Gratus, about two years before, had removed this Annas from the high-priesthood, and substituted Simon. Now Pontius Pilate restored Annas, and permitted Joseph Caiaphas, his son-in-law, to officiate as his colleague. This was the first year of their joint ministration, and both presided at our Lord's trial, in the year of the crucifixion.

THE 15th of Tiberius, A. U. C. 779, was the 30th of our Lord's life. By infallible notes of time his nativity is fixed to the Feast of Tabernacles 749 ; and the less sum taken from the greater, 30 is the remainder ; so that at the time of the opposite cardinal point, in this year, his age was precisely 29 years six months.

It has been objected, that Jesus began to be about 30 years old at his baptism *.

It must indeed be admitted, that this date is mentioned in immediate connexion with that part of the history. Hence some of the Harmony-writers contend, that our Lord was baptised in the first year of his forerunner's ministry; others that his age, in the 15th in Tiberius, was but 26. But a very moderate degree of attention to the evangelist's method of arranging his gospel will detect the fallacy of both conjectures. The author exhibits, in one orderly series, the different parts of the same subject; and then introduces another, which he prosecutes in the same manner; for example: he opens his narrative with an account, first of the Baptist's nativity, then of his Lord; and under either head notes the extraordinary circumstances relative to both. After a very concise view of a very few incidents, in the private life of either personage, he proceeds to the public character of each, and in the same order. In the third chapter the ministry of John is briefly described from verse 1 to 22, inclusively, where the baptism of Christ is mentioned, in connection with an advanced stage of that ministry. Hence a transition to another part of the general subject;—the personal ministry of Christ, the notation of whose age he brings into coincidence with the last-mentioned date, to which by a retrospective view, he virtually recalls the atten-

* Luke, iii. 21—23.

tion of his readers, who, without violating the contiguity of coexistent events, may consider the concise account of John's ministry as a parenthesis. Such then are two dates in juxtaposition. "It came to pass, in the 15th year of Tiberius Cæsar, that the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness; and Jesus himself began to be *about* 30 years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph," &c. The evangelist could not, with more precision, have defined Christ's age, at the time of the vernal equinox in that year, except he had chosen to write 29 years six months*.

ANNALISTS are confined to the order of time, and so exhibit fragments of history. The historian, collecting parts, unites them with skill, rejecting every thing incoherent, dissimilar, or superfluous, and so frames one perfect and well-proportioned whole. In this method of historical composition, the evangelist exhibited a model for Suetonius, who, in his lives of the Cæsars, "proposes to present the several parts distinctly, and not in the order of time, but to combine

* The author would, with no less satisfaction than justice, have acknowledged his obligation to any of the critics, in whose works he expected to find this coexistence of time and numbers. As a very probable conjecture, little short of certainty, his singular opinion is submitted to discerning judges. Those critics, if any such be, who will affirm, that at the time of his baptism the age of Jesus did not exceed 30 years, must on the same grounds maintain, that his baptism was subsequent to the imprisonment of John, which, in the order of things, is recorded as a prior transaction.

things

things of like nature, that he might avoid confusion *.”

IF to A. U. C. 779, the 15th of Nero, and 30th of Jesus Christ, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years be added, the reckoning is continued to the autumnal equinox 783, the 19th and 34th of Nero and Christ respectively. This is the true date of his baptism, to which succeeded his temptations in the wilderness; and then commenced his ministry in the year of the 30th jubile from the partition of Canaan. All these direct evidences from history and prophecy, refute as idle surmises the positions of archbishop Usher, that Jesus was baptised in the first of John's ministry, that he spent three years in private life, and then began to preach and confirm his doctrine by miracles. This train of arbitrary and incoherent arrangements disjoins events, which all the evangelists combine in comely order and continuous succession.

To prevent every suspicion of so long an interval, the recess into the desert is connected with the baptism at Jordan. “IMMEDIATELY the spirit driveth him into the wilderness, where he was tempted 40 days†.”

JESUS having suddenly disappeared, the priests and levites at Jerusalem, impatient to know whither he had retired, and anxious to learn what was his true character, sent a deputation to the Baptist, who was still continuing his ministrations about Bethabara‡. The

* Partes exequar sigillatim, neque per tempora, sed per species; quo distinctius demonstrari cognoscique possint. Octav. cap. 9.

† Mark, i. 12.

‡ John, i. 19.

time of this conference with the deputies may, with every circumstance of probability, be referred to the lapse of the 40 days nearly. For the next day, (after the return of the messengers), John seeing Jesus coming unto him, gave a fresh attestation to his character, as the Lamb of God, sent with authority and a special commission, to take away the sins of the world.

AGAIN the next day after, John, in the presence of two of his disciples, seeing Jesus as he walked, repeated his honourable testimony. These disciples, (the one Andrew the brother of Peter, and the other very probably John the Evangelist, who seldom records his own name), desirous of an interview, followed Jesus, and abode with him that day.

ON the following day, Jesus, on his way to Galilee, found Philip and Nathaniel, and having with the other two arrived at Cana, on the third day after the interview with Philip, or the 6th after the return from the wilderness, and the 46th from his baptism at Jordan, THERE he turned the water into wine. "THIS BEGINNING OF MIRACLES did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him *."

"AFTER this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples; and they continued *there* not many days†." This very short space of time, with the intermediate occurrences, the other evangelists pass over in silence. Luke, however,

* John, i. 29—51. and ch. ii. 11.

† Ch. ii. 12.

records

records the events in the exact order of time, subsequent to the departure from Capernaum. “ When the devil had ended all his temptation he departed from him for a season : and Jesus returned in the power of the spirit into Galilee, and a fame of him went out through all the region round about *.” “ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and, as his custom was, went into the synagogue on (Saturday) the sabbath-day, and stood up for to read. The book of the prophet Esaias was delivered unto him ; and when he had opened the book †, he found the place where it was written, The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he

* From sundry notations in the context, it is obvious that several incidents, not here recorded, did intervene before our Lord’s visit to Nazareth, when his renown had, in a very short time, spread far and wide. The honourable report concerning him was not a *word* (λογος) imparted by one individual to another, neither a *rumour* in a narrow corner, (Luke, vii. 7—17) ; but *fame* (ακη), Mat. iv. 24. (φημη) Luke, iv. 14. Rumor est paucorum, fama omnium. Whence could this FAME rise, but from his first signal miracle at Cana ? That he had likewise done miracles at Capernaum is unequivocally intimated, verse 34, “ Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself : whatsoever we have heard done in CAPERNAUM, do also here in *thy* country.” Such indirect references to prior events are of essential use in ascertaining historical order. From the context it is likewise certain, that Christ manifested forth his glory by stupendous exertions of supernatural power, before he spake, as never man did by his doctrine. He delivered his first sermon at Nazareth, but there he worked no miracles.

† Πτυξίς το βιβλίον, unfolded the little volume, which, perhaps, contained Esaias’ prophecy.

alone

alone hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, —to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. He then closed the book ; gave it again to the minister, and sat down:—the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him.”—After an expressive pause, “ He began to say unto them, This day is *this* scripture (*ἡ γραφή αὐτή*) fulfilled in your ears. All bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth * †.”

THE

* Luke, iv. 13. 22.

† Never prophet with equal solemnity or more effect opened his commission. It has already, and more than once been shewn, that the 4th, not the first of John’s ministry, and at the end of the first six months in that year, about the time of the autumnal equinox, was the true date of Christ’s baptism. It has also been shewn that the same year was not only sabbatical, but the 30th jubile from the partition of Canaan. Extremely frigid, not to say violent, is the arrangement in the Annals, where the first appearance of John on the banks of Jordan, the baptism of his Lord, the temptation in the wilderness, the mission of the deputies to John from Jerusalem, &c. are all crowded into his first year:—yet the time of Christ’s entrance on his personal ministry is deferred to the 4th. The passages already collected from the gospels, reprobate this disposition of events and times.

Were the art of regulating history by astronomy and chronology more generally known, many passages in the sacred writings, which are commonly read without emotion, (nay, with a kind of languid apathy), would forcibly arrest the attention of every mind, prepared by the knowledge of calculation, for consulting with discernment the Bible history. The prophecy so properly read with respect to the circumstance of time,

THE evangelist John proceeds in the natural series of things, and order of time. "The Jews passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Many believed in his name when they saw his miracles*." Six full months had now elapsed from the time of his baptism. From one circumstance it is presumed that he staid some time, perhaps several months, in Judea. For the pharisees having heard that he had made and baptised more disciples than John, Jesus left Judea and departed again into Galilee, by the way of Samaria, where he conversed with the woman at the well, and thence after two days departed, and went to Cana; where, on the application of a nobleman from Capernaum in behalf of his son, then at the point of death, he restored, at a distance, the patient to perfect health. This was the second of his miracles at Cana †.

IN the 5th chapter is mentioned a feast of the Jews, which has every probability of a passover, and the second in Christ's ministry. If so it were, Jesus was certainly at Jerusalem, and before his return described John as a luminary then set. "He *was* (not *is*) a

time, and so appositely applied, in the synagogue at Nazareth, is one of many pertinent examples. If all the learned commentators, deeply skilled in verbal criticism, and but very moderately acquainted with the doctrine of time in its measures, and the combinations of its parts, had been possessed of this indispensable qualification, from the days of Usher, the chronology of our Lord's life would not, as now, have been involved in perplexity.

* John, ch. ii. 13—23.

† Ch. iv. 1—54.

burning and a shining light." Verse 35. He was then probably thrown into prison, but not executed. The next account of Jesus describes him as in Galilee, about the sea of Tiberias.

THE two other evangelists (Matthew and Mark) report, that when Jesus had heard, that John was cast into prison, he came into Galilee *. Hence natural is the inference, that Jesus, while in Judea, heard these tidings, which account exactly corresponds to the notations, John, v. 35, and ch. vi. 1, compared together. These characters of time and place, establish the certainty of another historical term:—The return into Galilee, of which Matthew and Mark take notice, was (in the passages to which the texts above-mentioned refer) the third after the lapse of the 40 days in the wilderness. That in John, i. 43, and in Luke, iv. 14, was the first; the other in John, iv. 43, was the second; and that in Mat. iv. 12, Mark, i. 14, and John, vi. 1, was the third; some short time after the second passover in the ministry of Christ.—It may be objected, 1. That the imprisonment of the Baptist is here brought one year lower than in the numerous arrangements of the Harmonists, who generally comprehend this historical incident within the space of time between the first and second passover. It is replied, that this minute investigation is not intended to rectify alone the precarious and unchronological postulates of the worthy primate, but also to examine the no less inaccurate speculations

* Mat. iv. 12. and Mark, i. 14.

of our ever multiplying race of harmony writers. The evangelists, even when they seem to differ, are in perfect concord; whereas their Harmonists, as it were in compact, are at serious pains to convince the world, that these evangelists knew nothing of the matters which they transnitted to the world.

It may be objected, 2. That Matthew and Mark record several acts of Jesus, prior in the order of time to the imprisonment of the Baptist. Answer: This is not to be inferred from the order, and much less from the time of calling the twelve disciples. John the evangelist, Andrew, his brother Simon, afterwards surnamed Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel, were occasionally with their Lord from the date of the first miracle at Cana, but not constantly. They and others were permitted to attend their secular functions, and had repeated calls for a temporary attendance. The complete number twelve might likewise have been embodied, or rather actually was, between the return from the wilderness and the second passover; but though these two evangelists professedly begin their history from the time John was taken into custody, yet they do relate many things of a prior date. In exact harmony with this assertion, the former, in an advanced stage of his narrative, mentions a message from the Baptist, while in confinement, to Christ; and afterwards his martyrdom*. The latter, in like manner, gives a concise account of the martyrdom alone†. Is it not hence presumable,

* Matt. xi. 3. and ch. xiv. 10.

† Mark, vi. 27.

that

that the far greater number of the facts in both histories was prior in time to the apprehending and execution of that eminent prophet? From the remark in either gospel nothing more can be inferred, than that the writers did not undertake an orderly account of the transactions from the return out of the wilderness to the third expedition into Galilee.

THE result of this unavoidably prolix disquisition is, that the three memorable events of Christ's baptism, temptation, and entrance on his prophetic functions, must necessarily be referred to the 4th year of John's ministry, and the 19th of Tiberius, from the date of his partnership in the empire. If these points be admitted, the Metropolitan's hypothesis of three years spent in private life; from the end of the 40 days temptation to the commencement of this personal ministry, falls to the ground. If not, the computation by sabbatical years, the oracles of prophecy, and the concurrent report of all the four evangelists, forfeits every pretension to credibility. They must be fallacious guides. Nay, even on the Metropolitan's principle, that Christ was baptised in the first year of John's ministry, that text from an ancient prediction, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord!" was exquisitely proper for that herald of One greater and mightier, than himself: and after three years of privacy, it could not be improper for that greater and mightier, than the herald, to open his commission with another prediction equally authentic, "I am anointed to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." But,

O

inadvertently,

inadvertently, the Primate transfers, to the herald the honour of a jubile, and condemns to the shade of imaginary obscurity three years of our Lord's life subsequent to *his* singular conjecture of a prior consecration to the functions of a prophet and martyr. Such decisions darken counsel by words without knowledge.

IN the month Nisan of the Varronian year 786, which was that of the crucifixion, ended the 70th prophetical week. It therefore began in the same month, 759.

HENCE count forward three years, six months. The operation brings down the reckoning to Tifri, in the centre of that week, when the sacrifice and oblation did virtually cease, being superseded by a more excellent ministry. This revolution signalised the midst of the week, as had expressly been foretold. At its conclusion the whole apparatus of carnal ordinances, which had then lost even their typical virtue, were actually abolished, being nailed to the cross of Christ. One striking circumstance with which the prediction concludes—the destruction of the city and sanctuary—was suspended during the space of about 37 years; that is, a period before the then existing generation should pass away. In that interval the temple and the synagogues were kept open for the disciples of Moses; and thither the apostles resorting weekly on the day of the national sabbath, when the writings of Moses and the prophets were publicly read, did openly allege and prove, out of those scriptures, that Christ must have suffered, and risen from the dead; that this Jesus whom they preached

was

was the Messiah; and that, in condemning him, their rulers had fulfilled all that the voices of the prophets had foretold*. By this providential disposition of things did the temple and synagogues in Judea, and over the wide Roman empire, eventually serve as nurseries for the infancy of the Christian church. Before all the 12 apostles were called to seal their testimony by martyrdom, they had the satisfaction to see the doctrine of the new covenant to be made with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, widely disseminated by their labours; and the old covenant ratified on Horeb, its ordinances having then become beggarly elements, ready to vanish away†. It is worthy of remark, that, as the first year of Christ's ministry ran parallel with a jubile in the primitive series from Joshua, so the last began with a sabbatical rest in the secondary series, as restored by Nehemiah. The conclusion is, that the duration of this ministry is defined by a memorable prophecy, and its two terms (commencement and period) ascertained by two national cycles.

It likewise ended with a passover, solemnised at Jerusalem on the very same day of the week and of the moon, which characterised the first observance of this

* Acts, xiii. 27. ch. xv. 21. and ch. xvii. 3.

† Heb. viii. 8—13. Commentators and critics generally assign A. D. 63, (seven years before the desolation of the city and temple by Vespasian), for the date of this epistle. In this view, the mention of the Sinai covenant as superannuated, and about to vanish away, (Παλαιούμενον καὶ γηράσκον, ἐγγὺς ἀφανισμοῦ), seems to be prophetic.

festival at Raameses in Egypt. The interval is precisely 1526 solar tropical years from the Exodus, 218 septenary periods of years; and were the intermediate space measured by weeks of days, the sum would be complete, without one day deficient or supernumerary. If the subject be brought to the test of calculation in its numerous and complex forms, all the different operations terminate in one self-consistent and infallible conclusion.

It has been evinced that Jesus was baptised at the expiration of his 34th year. It may be alleged, that the analogy to the legal age of consecrating the Aaronical priests is thus violated. But Christ was a priest of a superior rank, and a distinct order. "It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood*." He was made under the law, a subject, but not a minister of that very dispensation which he came first to consummate, and then to abrogate. No one instance occurs of his performing the sacerdotal functions of the Hebrew ritual. On the contrary, as often as he performed miraculous cures on the persons of lepers, he always enjoined them to shew themselves to the priests. The objection is on these grounds impertinent.

It has been seriously objected, that Jesus solemnised his last passover neither at the prescribed time nor place, nor at the full moon, but two evenings before; not in the temple, or on the national altar, but in a

* Heb. vii. 14.

private house. It may be added too, that many learned critics have been weak or ridiculous enough to return it a serious answer. The learned Joseph Mede somewhere replies to this effect (though perhaps in different words): "As Christ was himself the temple, the altar, the oblation, and the priest, all these formalities were superseded." This may be approved as a vigorous sentiment, but must be rejected as a feeble answer. Much more proper it is to note, that the ordinance itself was out of date, a new institution being that very night substituted as a memorial of better things. Or rather, as just now hinted, the whole ritual of sacrifice and oblation had virtually ceased at the time of Christ's baptism. This passover was the last act of conformity with the prefigurative ritual. For Jesus, while dispensing that ordinance of substitution, the sacrament of his own body and blood, thus expressed a change of administration already begun: "Verily I say unto you, I will not henceforth drink of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my father's kingdom *."

* Mat. xxvi. 29. Our Lord in these words intimates his intention to partake neither of the passover, nor of the new sacrament, till the things signified by both should be fulfilled in the gospel dispensation, which was nigh at hand: or that he would not partake with them in any joy; till he rejoiced with them in the communications of the Holy Spirit. Macknight's Harmony, 545.

*Chronology of HEROD, AUGUSTUS, and TIBERIUS
NERO, including that of JESUS CHRIST, from the
first JULIAN Year to the Accession of CALIGULA,
adjusted to the VARRONIAN Years of ROME.*

	A. P. J. 4668
Reformation of the Roman Calendar	A. M. 3964
1. First Julian year. Tiberius born	A. U. Var. 709
2. Julius Cesar assassinated	- - - 710
3. Battle at Mutina. First consulate of Octa- vius	- - - 711
4. Defeat of Brutus and Cassius at Philippi	712
6. Antigonus and Herod rival kings in Judea	714
9. Antigonus slain. Herod reigns	- 717
10. Battle at Actium	- - - 723
16. First year of the Roman empire	- - - 724
18. Census and lustrum restored	- - - 726
27. Herod begins to rebuild the temple	- - - 735
29. It was made fit for service in two years	- - - 737
38. A second lustrum. Herod dedicates the temple	- - - 746
41. Christ born. An enrolment at Bethlehem	749
42. Herod dies. True date of the Christian era	750
45. Dionysian, or Vulgar, year of the Nativity	753
46. First year of the vulgar era	- - - 754
52. Archelaus dethroned	- - - 760
53. Christ 12 years old. Cyrenius levies a tax	761
57. Tiberius joint emperor	- - - 765
58. Augustus solemnises a lustrum and dies	766
59. Tiberius	

59. Tiberius sole emperor. Val. Gratus procu- rator of Judea	- - -	767
69. Val. Gratus recalled	- - -	777
71. P. Pilate succeeds. 15th of Tiberius. John's ministry begins. Jesus about 30 years old	- - - - -	779
75. Jesus is baptised, tempted, works miracles, preaches	- - - - -	783
76. Phlegon's eclipse, in the 4th of the 202d olympiad *	- - - - -	785
77. Crucifixion	- - - - -	786
78. Tiberius dies, in the 78th of his life and 23d of his reign	- - - - -	787

A. M. 4042

Jul. Per. 4747

* This eclipse, as a character of time, is extremely ambiguous. Even the year is uncertain. The fragment preserved by Eusebius runs thus, τῷ δὲ ἔτει τῆς σβ ολυμπιαδος ἐγένετο ἐκλειψις ἡλίου μεγίστη τῶν ἐγνωσμένων προτέρων, καὶ νύξ ὥρα 5 τῆς ἡμέρας ἐγένετο ὥστε καὶ ἀστέρας ἐν οὐρανῷ φανῆναι. “But on the (oo) year of the 202d olympiad was a very great eclipse of the sun, such as was not formerly known, and night came on at the 6th hour of the day (12 at noon), so that the stars were visible in the firmament.”

Such is the vague account of this very strange phenomenon. Bishop Beveridge, making a vain effort to strike a spark out of chaos, proposes an emendation in the first clause. τῷ δὲ ἔτει, he changes into τῷ δ' ἔτει, so as to transform the particle δὲ, but, into the numerical δ, 4, and thus renders the words, In the 4th year of the 202d olympiad, &c. Admit this correction as

not improbable, still no month and no day of a month is specified. Astronomers are puzzled in the search of a natural eclipse of this luminary at that hour, in a series of years before or after that olympiad. But though this report were marked with more characters of verisimilitude, the 4th of the 202d olympiad was the year before the crucifixion; and these discordant notations of time cannot be brought into the point of coincidence, without either antedating our Lord's birth, or abridging the years of his life. If one or the other be done, all the links which compose the compact chain of chronological characters above constructed, for the history of more than 40 centuries, are violently torn asunder.

In a less advanced stage of calculation, the time was when that preternatural darkness, suppose it did happen at the time of our Lord's passion, obtained the credit of a very striking collateral testimony in confirmation of the gospel history. As such Dr. Clarke considered it, in the first edition of his Sermons, at Boyle's Lecture. In the full persuasion that this corner-stone was sufficient to support any quantity of pressure, that great man set forth the argument, with all the advantage it could derive from his eminent abilities. His friend Dr. Sykes suggested the impropriety of resting the cause of Christianity on equivocal proofs, and prevailed with him to expunge it from the subsequent impressions.

The argument has since been revived, and the testimony of Phlegon vindicated with a needless parade of genius and erudition. In this controversy Dr. Chapman distinguished himself in a manner which might have done service to a better cause; and those who approve his sentiments of the subject, boast that his defence is not yet convicted of weakness or fallacy. It is a very unacceptable service to undeceive such as have fallen into a pleasing reverie. *Si populus decipi vult, decipiatur.* Mean time those who have not yet contracted an insurmountable predilection in favour of Phlegon's authority, are cautioned to withhold their full assent, till it be certain that the phenomenon

phenomenon under examination was observed on the very day of the crucifixion. Astronomical characters are not to be applied at random. A deep eclipse of that paschal full moon, like that which happened at Raameses on the night of the first passover, could it be certified by calculation, would be much more to the purpose.

Christianity acquires no credit from injudicious defences, and loses no strength from the removal of tottering bulwarks. The time was when the inspiration of the sacred writers was not judged sufficient, except the attribute of infallibility were likewise ascribed to every amanuensis. Printers, however, it was observed, had fallen into some mistakes, and MSS. were not found to agree in every minute circumstance. Critics were cautious of correcting palpable errors, lest they should incur the suspicion of heresy. No sooner was it admitted, that the sacred texts in some passages were faulty, than Freethinkers gave the alarm that uncertainty pervaded all. Bentley, by shewing that the multiplicity of various readings affords the means of restoring the true sense, defeated infidelity by repelling its weapons on itself. Christianity has suffered nothing by the objections of the learned to the credibility of the thundering legion, to the early cessation of miracles in the primitive church, to the vision said to have been exhibited to Constantine, to the defeat of Julian's attempts to rebuild Jerusalem. Nor would the grounds of the Christian faith be shaken, should certain writings, which some visionary critics believe to be canonical, be pronounced spurious.

Genealogy from David to Jesus Christ.

Introduction.

VARIOUS as the parts of nature and the events of time are the subjects of history. Of nature's parts some are stationary, ever in the same position with respect to others, and coexistent with all supposable times, as the Alps, Horeb, Niphates. Another class is partly coexistent and partly successive, as the generations of animals and men; "One generation passeth away, and another cometh; but the earth abideth for ever: the sun also riseth and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose."

HERE is suggested the idea of motion in a perpetual circuit, yet perfectly consistent with permanent and relative rest. The sun revolves on his axis, the planets on theirs; and all round the sun, as the centre of one harmonious system. With respect to this common centre, and to one another, the lesser orbs in the immense expanse are sometimes in a state of approach, sometimes of elongation, and their circumvolutions, though not always equable, are upon the whole uniform: or, in other words, the amount of their motions

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from

from one point of their circuits to the same again, is reducible to a mean quantity.

HISTORY, in its general character, whether traditional or written, implies COMPOSITION—an assemblage of incidents and facts *combined* according to the relations of time, place, and order, and considered as prior, contemporary, or subsequent.

HISTORICAL time is the result of astronomical measures, in their repetitions from one first point in duration, whence planetary motions are supposed to have begun, or from any fixed period generally known.

TIME, in its abstract nature, is one subject of metaphysic. Chronology treats of it in its parts, and their *composition* into an integral quantity, as a year, lunar, solar, sidereal; the mechanism of civil years, in their various forms and dimensions; circulating and fixed periods, national eras, &c.

ALL incidents, as earthquakes and hurricanes; and facts, as the rise and fall of empires, improvement in arts, revolutions in governments, and whatever else merits a place in the records of time, happened SOMEWHERE; in some certain spot of the terraqueous globe; in one of the four regions into which it is divided; in a particular province or city. This criterion derives the attribute of certainty from the identity and permanence of relative distances; as the circumstance of time depends on the uniformity of its natural measures, and instituted modes of computation.

CHRONOLOGY (including the application of astronomy) has been called the life and soul of history, without

without which it is but a confused lump, without form *. Geography assigns to the several parts of history their proper position; the transactions either deriving importance from the place, or the place from the transactions. But farther; all incidents and facts relate to persons, whether individuals or communities, considered as the agents or the passive subjects.

THE principal circumstances of historical facts are therefore three, corresponding to as many queries, with their answers; **WHEN**, **WHERE**, *to* **WHOM**, or *by* **WHOM** were they done?

Examples.

1. **WHEN** was the law promulgated? In the beginning of the 26th century from the creation.

2. **WHERE**? From Mount Sinai or Horeb in Arabia.

3. **TO WHOM**? To the 12 tribes of Israel, under the ministry of Aaron and Moses.

NOTATIONS of time, place, and personages, if not entered in records, are soon disfigured by report, and must at last sink into utter oblivion. But on the more important, history confers immortality. Communities, like individuals, die, and the race becomes immortal by succession. Generations pass in a train †.

THUS is acquired an additional resource in computation, whence history derives congruity with invariable

* Stillingfleet; Orig. Sacrae, B. i. 6.

† Ergo ipfas quamvis angusti terminus ævi
Excipiat, genus immortale manet.

Virg. Georg. iv. 208.

nature,

nature, and chronological characters. Sir Isaac Newton was the first of the moderns who applied, with success, this middle term for discoveries from the heterogeneous fragments of pagan mythology. It is now too late to regret that he did not examine by this test the chronology and history of the Bible. The happy result, had the experiment been tried, must have been an acquisition to sacred literature. An instance or two of what might have been done will suffice.

Example, I.

ACCORDING to the Hebrew text and our public version, the sons of Joseph were Manasseh and Ephraim*. In the Greek translation, Machir, a son of Manasseh, and Gilead, a son of Machir; together with Sutalaam and Taäm, two sons of Ephraim, and Edom, a son of Sutalaam, are expressed by their names in the register of Jacob's family who accompanied him from Canaan. In an age when the chronology of that vague, licentious version is held in superior estimation to the original, the defence of the Hebrew genealogies may perhaps expect a cool reception. Let the merits of the two authorities be weighed in an equal balance.

“ Joseph was 30 years old when he interpreted Pharaoh's dreams. His two sons were born before the years of famine came †.” This is a shrewd intimation that they were young. From the dungeon was Joseph hastily brought in unto Pharaoh. Is it probable that

* Gen. xlv. 20.

† Gen. xli. 46. 50.

a young stranger and a slave, committed to prison under a false charge of criminality, should have married the high priest's daughter; and thus contract affinity with that very family whose honour, it was unjustly said, he had attempted to stain; before his introduction to the king? Common sense remonstrates. Joseph's age in the second year of the famine, when Manasseh could not be more than eight years old, or Ephraim more than seven, was 39. But Jacob at the end of that; or the beginning of the next year, brought their sons and grandsons into Egypt! Where could the translators find the names? Not in the list of Moses, but in a much more recent catalogue*.

Example, 2.

BENJAMIN, it is well known, was the youngest of all Jacob's family, and his age at the migration from Canaan could not exceed 24, (if it were so much), yet 10 of his sons are said, in the Hebrew text and Greek Vulg. to have been in Jacob's retinue. The Alexandrine Gr. Pentateuch admits only three for sons, Bela, Beeher, and Ashbel. Of the other six, five are grandsons and one great grandson. Kennicott, in all his Dissertations, seems not to have observed the difficulty; which shews that the printed and manuscript copies are all uniformly erroneous. The error is manifest, for the last six names are all copied from catalogues of a later

* 1 Chron. vii. 14. 29.

date *. How can the critics account for the corruption of the Hebrew text? It has unhappily escaped the sagacity of the far greater number. Natural is the conjecture, that some scribe or owner of a copy, without the least design of an interpolation, might mark on the margin of Gen. xlv. 21, notes of reference to parallel passages. Another afterwards suspecting a deficiency in the numbers, and thinking the correction proper and necessary, might take the grandsons into the text.

OTHER instances of words, numbers, or sentences, left out, interpolated, or changed, by accident, or by officious and unskilful hands, from the motive of emendation, it were easy to produce. Those selected in the ensuing chapters relate solely to the subject of genealogy, and are such as may be reconciled with the course of nature, by restoring numerical signatures of a similar figure, for which those now extant in the original texts, seem to have been, by mistake substituted.

IN notations of number, the sacred writings alone are not reprehensible. Who could imagine that all the Roman historians, in and after the age of Augustus, should, as above remarked, add two full years to the short space between the birth and death of Tiberius

* See 1 Chron. vii. 6. and ch. viii. 1. See also Num. xxvi. 38—41. and Wall's Note on Gen. xlv. 21. At the time of the muster in the wilderness, the number of Benjamin's descendants might be 46,600, but he could not have one grandson at the descent into Egypt.

Nero? That some of them did take notice of a com-
partnership in sovereignty; but none made the requisite
deduction? That all defined accurately the last current
year of that prince's life, and all mistook that of his
nativity and decease? That they left on record the
means of ascertaining the true computation? And that
the evangelist Luke should be the only writer of that
age who characterised, with chronological precision, the
15th of that reign from its true commencement?

IN expressing the degrees of kindred, the sacred his-
torians, conformably with the idiom of their language,
use considerable latitude. Any descendant was not
improperly denominated of the first descent. Ezra,
after at least four intermediate generations, is described
as a son of Seraiah; and the infirm woman on whom
Jesus performed a miraculous cure was, after an interval
of thrice 14 generations, called a daughter of Abraham*.
Sometimes even a senior relation, by a political or figu-
rative sonship, is accounted the immediate descendant of
a junior predecessor in office, as in the case of Zede-
kiah, who is promiscuously called the father's brother,
the brother, and the son of Jeconiah†. Among the
Hebrews, succession to the same throne was equivalent
to adoption. From the penury of their language the
Old Testament writers could not, with sufficient mi-
nuteness, distinguish by one appropriate term every ra-
mification in genealogy.

* Ezra, vii. 1. Luke, xiii. 16.

† 2 Kings, xxiv. 17. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9. and 1 Chron. iii. 16.